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# NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

## Monterey, California



## THESIS

**MARINE CORPS OFFICERS AND ELECTION 2000:  
NEW PRAETORIANS OR LOYAL CENTURIONS?**

by

Clifford D. Chen

December 2001

Thesis Co-Advisors:

Mark J. Eitelberg  
Alice Crawford

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<b>REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE</b>			<i>Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188</i>	
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instruction, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188) Washington DC 20503.				
<b>1. AGENCY USE ONLY (Leave blank)</b>		<b>2. REPORT DATE</b> December 2001	<b>3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED</b> Master's Thesis	
<b>4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE:</b> Title (Mix case letters) Marine Corps Officers and Election 2000: New Praetorians or Loyal Centurions?			<b>5. FUNDING NUMBERS</b>	
<b>6. AUTHOR(S)</b> Chen, Clifford D.				
<b>7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b> Naval Postgraduate School Monterey, CA 93943-5000			<b>8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER</b>	
<b>9. SPONSORING /MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)</b> N/A			<b>10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER</b>	
<b>11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES</b> The views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government.				
<b>12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT</b> Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited			<b>12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE</b>	
<b>13. ABSTRACT (maximum 200 words)</b> This study examines the voting behavior of Marine Corps officers during the presidential election of 2000. The study determines which candidate Marine officers favored and explores some of the factors that influenced their choice. A survey was distributed to Marine Corps officers at the Naval Postgraduate School in August 2001. Frequencies and cross tabulations were used to analyze responses to the survey. The results show that the majority of Marine officers are Republican and favored George W. Bush in the election of 2000. However, Marine officers do not appear to be politically active beyond voting, and their voting choice is motivated by more than just party identification. It is recommended that standards of professionalism and rules regarding political activities continue to be enforced.				
<b>14. SUBJECT TERMS</b> Civil-Military Relations, Marine Corps Officers' Voting Behavior, Military and Presidential Elections, Partisanship, Republicanization			<b>15. NUMBER OF PAGES</b> 105	
			<b>16. PRICE CODE</b>	
<b>17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT</b> Unclassified	<b>18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE</b> Unclassified	<b>19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT</b> Unclassified	<b>20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT</b> UL	

NSN 7540-01-280-5500

Standard Form 298 (Rev. 2-89)  
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**MARINE CORPS OFFICERS AND ELECTION 2000:  
NEW PRAETORIANS OR LOYAL CENTURIONS?**

Clifford D. Chen  
Major, United States Marine Corps  
B.S., University of California at Berkeley, 1990

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

**MASTER OF SCIENCE IN MANAGEMENT**

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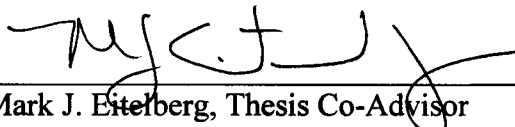
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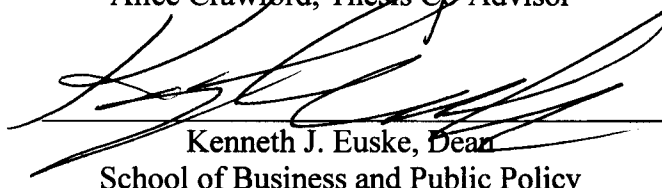
Approved by:



Mark J. Eitelberg, Thesis Co-Advisor



Alice Crawford, Thesis Co-Advisor



Kenneth J. Euske, Dean  
School of Business and Public Policy

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study examines the voting behavior of Marine Corps officers during the presidential election of 2000. The study determines which candidate Marine officers favored and explores some of the factors that influenced their choice. A survey was distributed to Marine Corps officers at the Naval Postgraduate School in August 2001. Frequencies and cross tabulations were used to analyze responses to the survey. The results show that the majority of Marine officers are Republican and favored George W. Bush in the election of 2000. However, Marine officers do not appear to be politically active beyond voting, and their voting choice is motivated by more than just party identification. It is recommended that standards of professionalism and rules regarding political activities continue to be enforced.



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## I. INTRODUCTION

Never before—including even the glory days of the Roman Empire—has one military so towered over all others on the planet.  
Eliot Cohen<sup>1</sup>

### A. CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS

Civil-military relations have been defined simply as the interaction between the armed forces and the society they serve.<sup>2</sup> As a nation founded by men mistrustful of standing armies, America and its professional military have a history of strained relations.<sup>3</sup> Now, as we begin the twenty-first century, civil-military relations remain an important topic in the nation. With the end of the Cold War, America now finds itself the lone military superpower of the world. No longer required to contain communism, our armed forces policed an empire for a short time of “Pax Americana.” Now engaged in a war against terrorism, the military is once again in the spotlight. The relationship between America and its military is adjusting to this new reality, but not without tension and some reasons for concern.

The relationship between civilians and their military has undergone a significant change in the past twenty years. The powerful military of the 1980s, under President Reagan, witnessed the demise of the Soviet Union. Under President Bush, the armed forces vanquished Iraq in Desert Storm. This triumph and euphoria, however, gave way to feelings of confusion and frustration among many in the military during President Clinton’s terms. Drawdowns and cutbacks, coupled with seemingly muddled, unpopular, and more numerous peacekeeping missions increased tensions between the military and the administration.<sup>4</sup> Some members of the media and academics became concerned that

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<sup>1</sup> Eliot A. Cohen, “Why the Gap Matters,” The National Interest (Fall 2000): 41.

<sup>2</sup> Don M. Snider and Miranda A. Carlton-Carew, “The Current State of U.S. Civil-Military Relations: An Introduction,” U.S. Civil-Military Relations: In Crisis or Transition?, edited by Don M. Snider and Miranda A. Carlton-Carew (Washington, D. C.: The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1995), 18.

<sup>3</sup> James Clotfelter, The Military in American Politics (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1973), 10-27.

<sup>4</sup> Don Snider, John Nagl, and Tony Pfaff, “Army Professionalism, The Military Ethic, and Officership in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century,” West Point and American Military Culture web site.



the military was growing “out of control”<sup>5</sup> and becoming isolated from civilian society by a widening cultural “gap.”<sup>6</sup>

## **B. ELECTION 2000 AND THE MILITARY**

Concerns about civil-military relations continued through the 2000 Presidential election, where absentee military votes may very well have determined the outcome.<sup>7</sup> This paper examines several interesting questions related to the military vote in the election of 2000. First, has the military become a political interest group much like labor unions? Next, what is the effect of the so-called cultural gap on the military vote? Also, what was the effect of the Clinton administration on how the military voted? What are the effects of peer and social pressure on how people in the military vote? Finally, what did people in the military think of the candidates and for whom did they eventually vote?

Some writers have claimed the military was manipulated by the Republican Party to win the election and was just another partisan political interest group.<sup>8</sup> Did the military endorse candidates or appear at political functions? Were military members encouraged to vote for a candidate? Were votes guaranteed to a particular candidate for promised policies? If such claims were true, they would mark a serious departure from the military’s traditional role as an “apolitical servant of the state” and could indicate a decline in professionalism.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Richard H. Kohn, “Out of Control: The Crisis in Civil-Military Relations,” The National Interest (Spring 1994): 3.

<sup>6</sup> Thomas E. Ricks, “On American Soil: The Widening Gap Between The U.S. Military and U.S. Society,” Project on U.S. Post Cold-War Civil-Military Relations, John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies, Working Paper No. 3 (Harvard University, May 1996) , 3.

<sup>7</sup> The results of the election may be debated for years to come. President Bush’s margin of victory in the state of Florida varies from the official margin of 537 votes to a deficit of 332 votes, depending on the standards used to count votes. “Deadlocked Again: Newspapers Find No Clear Winner in Ballot Review,” The Associated Press, <http://www.abcNEWS.com>, 10 May 2001. “Bush still wins Florida in newspaper recount,” CNN, <http://www.CNN.com>, 4 April 2001. It was estimated that as many as 7,000 overseas absentee votes in Florida were counted after election day. A majority of these were assumed to be by military. These votes may have given Bush victory. “Priority Mail: Overseas Absentee Ballots May Be Key to Election,” <http://www.abcNEWS.com>, 14 November 2000.

<sup>8</sup> Richard L. Berke, “Democrats Seek Inquiry On Florida Vote Count,” New York Times, 16 July 2001.

<sup>9</sup> Peter D. Feaver and Richard H. Kohn, “The Gap: Soldiers, Civilians and their Mutual Misunderstanding,” The National Interest (Fall 2000): 34.

The results of the election suggested that the American people as a whole are somewhat evenly divided between the two major parties.<sup>10</sup> Recent literature claims that the vast majority of members of the military have become increasingly conservative, both socially and politically.<sup>11</sup> This suggests an increasing cultural gap between the military and the American people it serves. Some have suggested this conservatism and the gap are simply the basic nature of the military's function and mindset.<sup>12</sup> One must ask, however: Are this gap and the apparently unbalanced representation of political views in the military acceptable in a liberal democratic society where the armed forces vote?

Next, what effect did serving under President Clinton have on how the military voted? President Clinton's poor relationship with the military was well documented.<sup>13</sup> Perceptions regarding his lack of service during Vietnam and his campaign promise to lift the military's ban on gays planted seeds of mistrust in the military establishment from the beginning.<sup>14</sup> His conduct later and the subsequent impeachment may have had an impact as well on how many in the military viewed him both personally and as a leader. Should the Commander-in-Chief be held to a higher moral standard, just as the officers who serve under him? Did eight years under President Clinton influence the voting behavior of many members of the military?

After election night 2000, it became apparent that military votes were significant to the outcome. Many people automatically assumed that the majority of people in the military voted Republican.<sup>15</sup> Indeed, do people in the military vote as a bloc? Do peer pressure and socialization drive military members to vote for a particular candidate? If

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<sup>10</sup> The popular vote was 50,996,116 for Gore, 50,456,169 for Bush. Forty eight percent versus forty eight percent respectively. <http://www.CNN.com>

<sup>11</sup> Ricks, "On American Soil," 10-11.

<sup>12</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press, 1957) , 79.

<sup>13</sup> Mark J. Eitelberg and Roger D. Little, "Influential Elites and the American Military after the Cold War," in U.S. Civil-Military Relations: In Crisis or Transition?, edited by Don M. Snider and Miranda A. Carlton-Carew (Washington, D. C.: The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1995) , 50.

<sup>14</sup> Andrea Stone, "Bush gets cheers in the barracks," USA Today, 8 January 2001, 1.

<sup>15</sup> "Military Vote in Florida Could Cement Bush Victory," <http://www.NewsMax.com>, 9 November 2000. Bill Sammon, "Stiffing The Troops Serving Overseas," The Washington Times, 8 May 2001. Richard L. Berke, "Lieberman Put Democrats In Retreat On Military Vote," New York Times, 15 July 2001.

this were true, what factors would cause people in the military to vote for the same candidate?

All these factors combined may have affected the opinions of people in the military. Both Al Gore and George W. Bush campaigned for a strong military.<sup>16</sup> What did people in the military think of these two candidates? On what grounds were they evaluated? What made one a better choice for President in the minds of military voters?

### C. MARINE CORPS OFFICERS AND THE ELECTION

When discussing America's military, it is important not to overlook the place of the United States Marine Corps. The Marine Corps has been called a unique force in readiness and some think it has the strongest service culture.<sup>17</sup> Yet, much of academic literature seems to focus on civil-military relations in the Army, Navy, and Air Force. Described as "extremists" by some,<sup>18</sup> Marines have a culture and ethos that have earned them a reputation as one of the world's premier fighting forces. As an organization dedicated to victory in battle, should its members be set apart from a civilian society concerned with peace and prosperity, or should civilian and military values be the same? For example, should we expect military and civilian voting patterns to be the same? If military voting behavior is so different from that of civilians, it will surely be evident in how Marine officers viewed the election. Why would their voting behavior be as skewed to the right, as some claim?<sup>19</sup> Would it confirm a decline in professionalism and a rise in partisanship? Does it validate the opinions of those who think the military is "out of touch" and should more closely resemble society? Could their voting behavior be a manifestation of their frustration with serving under the Clinton administration? Do socialization and peer pressure result in officers voting for the same candidate? Who did Marine officers think was the better candidate, and why?

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<sup>16</sup> "A Case for the Defense: Gore, Bush Both Hawks on Security Matters," <http://www.abcNEWS.com>.

<sup>17</sup> American Military Culture in the Twenty-first Century, edited by Walter F. Ulmer, Jr., Joseph J. Collins, and T. O. Jacobs (Washington, D.C.: Center For Strategic and International Studies, 2000), 13.

<sup>18</sup> Rowan Scarborough, "Top Army woman apologizes for calling Marines 'extremists': Veterans, Gingrich, others on Hill demand she be fired," Washington Times, 14 November 1997, 5.

<sup>19</sup> Kohn, "Out of Control," 7.

#### **D. PRAETORIAN GUARD OR LOYAL CENTURIONS?**

The primary objective of this study is to determine some of the factors that may have influenced Marine officers' voting behavior in the 2000 Presidential election and what it may mean to society. One may conclude that there is a problem when the American people "assume" the military will vote for a particular candidate. It follows that this expectation or image may compromise the military's apolitical and professional nature, and generate mistrust between civilians and the men and women who serve them. If Marine officers' votes were indeed so generally different from those of the American electorate, then it is important that the American people understand why.

Some writers have found similarities between the U.S. military and ancient Imperial Rome's Praetorian Guard.<sup>20</sup> Originally formed as the emperor's bodyguard, the Praetorians ended up controlling the government by overthrowing emperors and picking new ones. The existence of Praetorianism is often the first symptom and cause of a state's decline.<sup>21</sup> So, in the presidential election of 2000, did Marine Corps officers exhibit the characteristics of a "Praetorian Guard," or can they still be considered America's loyal centurions, obediently guarding the far-flung borders and exerting America's will on command?

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<sup>20</sup> William Pfaff, "The Praetorian Guard," The National Interest 62 (Winter 2000/01): 57.

<sup>21</sup> Eric A. Nordlinger, Soldiers in Politics: Military Coups and Governments (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1977), 3.

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## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. WHAT IS THE EFFECT OF POLITICAL PARTY ON VOTE?

No nation's armed forces remain apart from politics. Politics is concerned with the distribution of values and power within a society—and the military can hardly be prevented from participating in that process in some manner.

Welch and Smith<sup>22</sup>

This section examines the notion that the military of the early 21<sup>st</sup> century has become a partisan interest group. It would seem odd to equate the military to the United Auto Workers, but, in the heated days just before and after the presidential election, such comparisons were made, especially when it became evident that military absentee votes could determine the outcome in Bush's favor.<sup>23</sup> Democratic Party pundits assumed the military votes would favor Bush and the Republican Party.<sup>24</sup> This is a problem, because most people agree that partisan politics and the military do not mix. As Samuel Huntington writes in his seminal work, *The Soldier and the State*: "Politics is beyond the scope of military competence, and the participation of military officers in politics undermines their professionalism....The military officer must remain neutral politically."<sup>25</sup> And Janowitz asserts in *The Professional Soldier*, that military professionals "do not attach themselves to political parties or overtly display partisanship."<sup>26</sup> Elected leaders need politically neutral advice from disinterested military professionals to make unbiased decisions. The military also needs to maintain bipartisan support in Congress to sustain funding.<sup>27</sup> This leaves us with a question concerning the recent election. What is the effect of political party affiliation on soldiers' votes? In other words, has the military really become a partisan political interest group,

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<sup>22</sup> Claude E. Welch, Jr. and Arthur K. Smith, Military Role and Rule: Perspectives on Civil-Military Relations (North Scituate, Massachusetts: Duxbury Press, 1974) , 5.

<sup>23</sup> www.Time.com/Message Board. Although this is not the most academic of sources, the fact that some people would make this claim means the impression has been made on the general public.

<sup>24</sup> Bill Sammon, "Stiffing The Troops Serving Overseas," The Washington Times, 8 May 2001.

<sup>25</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations (Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press, 1957) , 71.

<sup>26</sup> Morris Janowitz, The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait (Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press, 1960) , 233-234.

<sup>27</sup> Drew A. Bennett, "The Long View of Politics," Marine Corps Gazette, July 1997, 53.

or does it remain a force of otherwise disinterested professionals? Are military officers the “hard-right” Republicans, as some believe? Why do officers apparently prefer the Republican Party? And how do Marine officers, in particular, feel about political partisanship?

### **1. Is the Military a Republican Political Interest Group?**

To start, the conflict between those in the military and the Democratic Party has a history. In their article, “Grand Army of the Republicans,” Bacevich and Kohn observe that, “Republicans have regarded the military as a political interest group to be showered with benefits just as Democrats court teachers’ unions and environmental groups.”<sup>28</sup> According to Bacevich and Kohn, since the Vietnam War and the seeming abandonment of the military by liberals and the Democrats, “the Republicans have become the ‘avatars’ of a strong national defense, and, by extension, champions of the honor and prerogatives of America’s fighting men.”<sup>29</sup> Donnelly’s article, “Why Soldiers Dislike Democrats,” also traces the rift between the military and the Democratic Party to the Vietnam War. Donnelly writes: “Once Vietnam ceased to be Lyndon Johnson’s war and became Richard Nixon’s war, Democrats often allowed opposition to the war to become contempt for all things military, including ‘baby killers’ in uniform.” Donnelly believes the military “weakness” of the Carter years rekindled the shame of Vietnam and that “Democrats also trumpeted their opposition to the defense build-up of the Reagan years. Not only did they complain about Reagan’s spending increases, but they derided his simple patriotism and obvious love for the military.”<sup>30</sup> Bacevich and Kohn believe that, as a result, many in the military credit President Reagan’s build-up of the armed forces in the 1980s with restoring the pride and self-esteem of career soldiers still scarred by Vietnam. The patriotism of the Reagan era also influenced many conservatives to join the All-Volunteer Force, which may account for the current ideological imbalance in today’s military. Bacevich and Kohn assert that Republicans sent the message that they

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<sup>28</sup> Andrew J. Bacevich and Richard H. Kohn, “Grand Army of the Republicans,” The New Republic, 8 December 1997, 22.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>30</sup> Tom Donnelly, “Why Soldiers Dislike Democrats: In the mythology of military life, the Democratic party is the enemy,” The Weekly Standard, 4 December 2000.

cared about the military and backed it up with spending.<sup>31</sup> Donnelly writes: “The second powerful myth that shapes today’s military—the glorious victory in the Gulf War—also features the theme of Democratic perfidy, in the form of the partisan vote in Congress on whether to go to war.” And he continues: “The Lewinsky scandal and the impeachment of Clinton further alienated the military from the Democrats....”<sup>32</sup>

Anecdotal evidence indicates that military officers strongly favor the Republican Party. As Bacevich and Kohn write, “today’s officers scorn ‘liberalism’ and all its works, and consider Democrats presumptively anti-military and therefore untrustworthy.”<sup>33</sup> As an example, Kohn notes the publicly hostile actions of the military toward President Clinton and the public affection for Republican politicians and causes.<sup>34</sup> In following a recruit platoon through training at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, Thomas Ricks perceived that Marine officers were openly identifying with the Republican Party as the norm, overwhelmingly “hard-right Republican,” and “largely comfortable with the views of Rush Limbaugh.”<sup>35</sup> Ricks realizes that there has always been a conservative streak in the military, much as journalists tend to be liberals, but he suspects that Marines are now more conservative and politically active than ever before. According to Ricks, a professor at West Point found that, for her cadets, “being a Republican has become part of the definition of being a military officer,” and that they believed “the Democratically-controlled congress was Public Enemy No. 1. No. 2 was the liberal media.”<sup>36</sup>

Recent surveys support the claim that the majority of officers identify with the Republican Party. Ricks cites a 1995 survey of Marine Corps officers that showed over 50 percent of new second lieutenants identified themselves as conservatives, increasing to 69 percent in the higher ranks.<sup>37</sup> Another survey by Holsti also supports the assertion that officers have become more partisan politically. Holsti found that, from 1976 to

<sup>31</sup> Bacevich and Kohn, 22.

<sup>32</sup> Donnelly, 2.

<sup>33</sup> Bacevich and Kohn, 22.

<sup>34</sup> Kohn, 3.

<sup>35</sup> Ricks, “On American Soil,” 11.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.



1996, officers who claimed they were Republicans climbed from 33 percent to 67 percent, while those claiming to be Democrats declined from 12 percent to only 7 percent. At the same time, officers who claimed Independent affiliation went from 46 percent to 22 percent.<sup>38</sup> In Holsti's opinion, "On the face of it, a large military that is becoming more politically active at the same time it is increasingly concentrated on one end of the partisan and ideological spectrum is a cause for concern."<sup>39</sup> Citing this evidence that the majority of officers consider themselves Republicans, Bacevich and Kohn feel that having "a politicized military, not to mention one whose officer corps is so closely identified with one party, is both bad for the services and bad for democracy."<sup>40</sup>

In recent elections, retired generals and admirals have publicly endorsed candidates for both parties, but more recently it seems that many more have endorsed Republicans. Bacevich and Kohn think this also indicates a rise in Republican partisanship as well as a change in the military from conservative temperament to conservative ideology.<sup>41</sup> Kohn asserts in another article:

The military should not participate in any fashion in politics....If officers belong to a political party, run for office, represent a particular group or constituency, publicly express their views (and vote), attack or defend the executive leadership—in short, behave like politicians—they cannot be trusted to be neutral servants of the state and guardians of society.<sup>42</sup>

There is also concern that a larger proportion of military officers vote than do civilians as a whole. Kohn feels that today's military is "out of control," has abandoned a century-and-a-half tradition of non-partisanship, and has begun "thinking, voting, and even espousing Republicanism with a capital R."<sup>43</sup> Thus, Bacevich and Kohn believe the military should follow General George C. Marshall's example of political neutrality and

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<sup>38</sup> Ole R. Holsti, "A Widening Gap Between the Military and Civilian Society?: Some Evidence, 1976-1996," Project on U.S. Post Cold-War Civil-Military Relations, John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies, Working Paper No. 13 (Harvard University, May 1996) , 4.

<sup>39</sup> Holsti, 18.

<sup>40</sup> Bacevich and Kohn, 24.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>42</sup> Richard H. Kohn, "The Forgotten Fundamentals of Civilian Control of the Military in Democratic Government," Project on U.S. Post Cold-War Civil-Military Relations, John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies, Working Paper No. 11 (Harvard University, May 1996) , 16.

<sup>43</sup> Kohn, "Out of Control," 7.

not vote.<sup>44</sup> Ricks adds: “Not only do today’s officers appear to be more conservative than in the past, they also appear to be more active in politics, both in their identification and their voting behavior.” And, while no more than 1 in 500 officers cast a ballot following the Civil War, today, “after historically shying away from voting, military personnel for the last decade have been voting in greater percentages than that of the general population.”<sup>45</sup> Ricks feels that this is cause for some concern, because “when the military is politically active it edges towards being an independent actor in domestic politics.”<sup>46</sup> Research by Feaver and Kohn suggests that

the long tradition of a military without a conscious association with a particular political party has given way to a new reality. While the officers surveyed continue to consider themselves neutral servants of the state, they have developed a more distinctive partisan identity.<sup>47</sup>

Some feel that the growth of this partisan identity alone will result in the military being viewed as “just another conservative special interest group.”<sup>48</sup> Indeed, one writer suggests that some Democrats may already perceive the military as a Republican entity as evidenced by an organized effort to disqualify military absentee ballots in Florida after the election.<sup>49</sup> Kohn and Feaver believe that, if this trend continues, it could result in the armed forces losing general public and financial support. They assert that, although public confidence overall in the military remains high, it is also brittle and shallow. Civilian authorities would trust military advice less, and professionalism would decline. Further, the authors argue that an armed force identified with the Republican Party would hurt military recruiting, as people of different political leanings would be discouraged from joining.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Bacevich and Kohn, 25.

<sup>45</sup> Ricks, “On American Soil,” 13.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>47</sup> Peter D. Feaver and Richard H. Kohn, “Digest of Findings and Studies,” Project on the Gap Between the Military and Civilian Society (Triangle Institute for Security Studies, June 2000), 3.

<sup>48</sup> Wayne Minami, “If military exists on margins of society, democracy suffers,” Marine Corps Times, 15 January 2001, 62.

<sup>49</sup> Bill Sammon, “Stiffing the Troops Serving Overseas,” The Washington Times, 8 May 2001.

<sup>50</sup> Peter D. Feaver and Richard H. Kohn, “The Gap: Soldiers, Civilians and their Mutual Misunderstanding,” The National Interest (Fall 2000): 35-36.

## 2. The Military as Apolitical Professionals?

So far, there is evidence that military officers have a greater affinity for the Republican Party and that a greater proportion of them vote than does the general population. In contrast to those who claim there is partisanship, others write that, historically, partisan politics are generally regarded as distasteful and dirty to professional soldiers, since politicians are seen as too self-serving and corrupt.<sup>51</sup> As Janowitz writes: “According to the definition of military honor, the professional soldier is ‘above politics’ in domestic affairs.” Janowitz also asserts that the military is not a unified political force.<sup>52</sup> According to Clotfelter, military officers have little time to lobby and pursue the “grassroots” activism that is required of an effective interest group. Clotfelter believes that soldiers tend to dislike political parties because they have a tendency to disunite, divide people, and create differences. Clotfelter also writes that, in general, the modern military in America has had little to do with active partisanship, especially in the “smoke-filled room” sense.<sup>53</sup>

One of the main concerns of those who fear military partisanship is that people in the military are now voting in greater proportions than in the general public.<sup>54</sup> Some, however, do not believe that voting is necessarily partisan. The military and voting in the U.S. have a history. Westermann, for example, believes that Kohn’s contention regarding the American military’s century-and-a-half tradition of nonpartisanship is “misleading and debatable.” Westermann asserts that military and veteran votes strongly affected the elections of Lincoln, Grant, and Harrison.<sup>55</sup> One reason few soldiers voted after the Civil War might be that some states denied the vote to soldiers during that era. Clotfelter found that, as late as 1904, certain states denied the vote to “idiots, paupers, Indians, soldiers, and sailors.”<sup>56</sup> In contrast to assertions that voting is improper for soldiers, Huntington points out that, in previous eras of isolation from civilian society

<sup>51</sup> Eric A. Nordlinger, Soldiers in Politics: Military Coups and Governments (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1977) , 56. Huntington, 259.

<sup>52</sup> Janowitz, 233-234.

<sup>53</sup> James Clotfelter, The Military in American Politics (New York: Harper & Row, 1973) , 27.

<sup>54</sup> Ricks, “On American Soil,” 13.

<sup>55</sup> Edward B. Westermann, “Contemporary Civil-Military Relations: Is the Republic in Danger?,” Aerospace Power Chronicles, <http://www.airpower.maxwell.af.mil>.

<sup>56</sup> Clotfelter, 19.

such as in the 1920s, military members were actually encouraged to vote so that they would be more like “regular citizens.”<sup>57</sup>

It is interesting to note how others view the military and voting. The French approached military voting with the tradition of “la grande muette” (the great mute force). Welch and Smith write that the French believed the military should not speak and only obey. The French not only isolated their soldiers from political debates and partisan disputes, but also denied their soldiers the right to vote. The French felt that “the soldier under arms...must remain a stranger to all parties and to all political strife....”<sup>58</sup> and that “the vote is an element of discord and disunion which we do not need” for it “would endanger the moral authority that the chiefs must have over their subordinates....”<sup>58</sup> This policy may seem reasonable, but it still resulted in attempted coups in 1958 and 1961. By removing their ability to act as private citizens, French army officers felt compelled to make their opinions known by other means.<sup>59</sup>

In contrast, Robert Heinlein’s science fiction novel, *Starship Troopers*, portrays a future society where the right to vote is *only* granted to military veterans.<sup>60</sup> Although some may regard this as fanciful, Switzerland, one of the world’s older democracies, requires military service, as a responsibility of citizenship, to earn the right to vote.<sup>61</sup>

Betros believes that exercising the right to vote does not make the military partisan. Ricks expressed concern that the voting rates of the military have been above 60 percent for the last four elections.<sup>62</sup> Betros writes that much of this can be attributed to the Absentee Voting Act of 1986. It established Voting Assistance programs and encouraged military members to vote, and it assisted them in casting absentee ballots.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Huntington, 284.

<sup>58</sup> Welch and Smith, 210.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, 212-229.

<sup>60</sup> Robert A. Heinlein, *Starship Troopers* (New York: G. P. Putnam’s Sons, 1959) , 182.

<sup>61</sup> John Keegan, *A History of Warfare* (New York: Vintage Books, 1993) , 232.

<sup>62</sup> Lance Betros, “Political Partisanship and the Military Ethic in America,” *Armed Forces & Society* 27, No. 4 (Summer 2001): 502-503.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 503.

Laws, however, forbid the marching of troops to voting places. And voting, while encouraged, is not ordered.<sup>64</sup>

As long as no one in authority attempts to issue voting guidance, it would be difficult to justify denying the military's right to vote as American citizens. As Huntington writes: "In a free state the citizen did not cease to be a citizen when he became a soldier but rather became a soldier because he was a citizen."<sup>65</sup> A letter to the *Marine Corps Gazette*, responding to an article calling for political neutrality, asserts that Marines' right to think about and vote is still important because "our responsibilities as citizens of this Nation...transcend our status as members of the military."<sup>66</sup> Betros asserts that those in the military are not party employees or activists. According to Betros, they are "*the consumers, not the purveyors*, of the party's partisan appeals and policies."<sup>67</sup> Betros also writes that soldiers owe no loyalty to the Republican Party, and voting is strictly a private act. He observes "it does nothing to mold public opinion, pressure elected officials, or build political constituencies; rather, it is a right of citizenship...."<sup>68</sup>

### **3. How "Republican" Are Military Officers?**

As previously noted, some writers are concerned that officers are "hard-right" Republicans. Although evidence indicates that the majority of officers prefer the Republican Party, they may not be as conservative or as extreme as some have claimed.

Feaver and Kohn conducted a survey of military officers to determine the nature of the civil-military gap and found that officers are indeed more conservative than the civilian elite, but not more conservative than the general public.<sup>69</sup> They also found that, contrary to Ricks' anecdotal evidence, "Their [military officers] political views are not,

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<sup>64</sup> Marine Corps Order 5370.7B, Political Activities, 8 March 1993.

<sup>65</sup> Huntington, 165.

<sup>66</sup> Paul A. Shelton, "A Responsible Citizens Duty," Marine Corps Gazette, March 2001, 16-17.

<sup>67</sup> Betros, 514.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 514.

<sup>69</sup> Peter D. Feaver and Richard H. Kohn, "The Gap: Soldiers, Civilians and their Mutual Misunderstanding," The National Interest (Fall 2000): 31.

however, the ‘hard right’ Republican positions some observers expected to see.”<sup>70</sup> Finally, Feaver and Kohn found high identification with the Republican Party, although they did not research the level of partisan activity:

The so-called “Republicanization of the force” finding has received considerable attention and in some cases has been misunderstood. While we discovered a remarkably high percentage of partisan association, we did not ask other questions on our survey about partisanship and therefore have no systematic evidence of a correlation between party identification and intensity of partisan activity.<sup>71</sup>

In “Connected to Society: Political Beliefs of U.S. Army Generals,” Dowd writes that, while the majority of generals surveyed for his study did identify with the Republican Party, their views were comparable with those of mainstream society. Dowd also found that the generals were not particularly loyal to the Republican Party and often voted for the “man,” not the “party.” Overall, Dowd concludes that the attitudes and opinions of the generals were not those of a “dissatisfied Praetorian Guard.”<sup>72</sup>

Military officers may identify with the Republican Party at this time, because like most voters from a profession, they tend to support the party that they believe will look out for their best interests, such as national defense and the health of the armed forces.<sup>73</sup> Betros asserts that those in the military, however, can be just as fickle as the general public when it comes to party loyalty.<sup>74</sup> Republicans do not have sole ownership of a platform favoring a strong defense. The Democratic Party, too, has publicly advocated a strong national defense, and defense budgets in a divided Congress require a fair amount of bipartisan support.<sup>75</sup> Ricks notes that, in days of shrinking budgets, Republicans could

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<sup>70</sup> Feaver and Kohn, “The Gap,” 32.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>72</sup> James J. Dowd, “Connected to Society: The Political Beliefs of U.S. Army Generals,” Armed Forces & Society 27, No. 3 (Spring 2001): 352-358.

<sup>73</sup> David R. Segal, “U.S. Civil-Military Relations in the Twenty-first Century: A Sociologist’s View,” in U.S. Civil-Military Relations: In Crisis or Transition?, edited by Don M. Snider and Miranda A. Carlton-Carew (Washington, D. C.: The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1995), 191.

<sup>74</sup> Betros, 514.

<sup>75</sup> Robert F. Hahn II, “Politics for Warriors: The Political Education of Professional Military Officers,” Project on U.S. Post Cold-War Civil-Military Relations, John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies, Working Paper No. 12 (Harvard University, May 1996), 39.

be cutting spending on defense as much as Democrats and “it will be interesting to see how the political beliefs of the officer corps changes when it realizes that to be ‘conservative’ is no longer necessarily to be ‘pro-defense spending.’ ”<sup>76</sup>

#### **4. Why Do Military Officers Like the Republican Party?**

One of the concerns cited previously was the military’s strong alignment with the Republican Party. In addition to the history previously cited, what other factors may contribute?

There are other reasons why Marines could be drawn to the Republican Party. According to Betros, those in the military value the group over the individual. They value loyalty, obedience, discipline, and responsibility. Betros writes that these values are directly opposed to what the Democratic Party has come to stand for. Starting with the 1960s baby boomers, the “Democratic Party was receptive to those who embraced the ethos of self.”<sup>77</sup> According to Betros, Democrats are seen as promoting the individual over the institution, while Republicans have become known for their emphasis on more group-centered values.

Betros believes military officers also appreciate the Republican approach to use of the military, where, “the military is not the answer to every difficult foreign policy situation.”<sup>78</sup> Betros also writes: “Republicans would maintain a strong military, but avoid using it unless important national interests were at stake....This perspective harmonizes with the attitudes of military officers....”<sup>79</sup> In addition, Donnelly writes: “The Lewinsky scandal and the impeachment of Clinton further alienated the military from the Democrats, who troops believe abandoned any pretext of principle in favor of the desire to maintain power.” Or as one officer said: “They chose party over nation.”<sup>80</sup>

Marines have also expressed concern about “political correctness,” and that attempts to civilianize the military in the name of “social engineering” were degrading

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<sup>76</sup> Ricks, “On American Soil,” 19.

<sup>77</sup> Betros, 506-507.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 510.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 509.

<sup>80</sup> Donnelly, 2-3.

warfighting effectiveness.<sup>81</sup> Some people have attributed these attempts to liberal Democrats such as Representative Patricia Schroeder.<sup>82</sup> Therefore, Betros asserts that a major reason why Marines align themselves with the Republican or Democratic Party could be because of their professional beliefs or values rather than party loyalty.<sup>83</sup>

An example of this motivation for alignment with a Republican candidate was Bacevich and Kohn's criticism of retired officers who endorsed George W. Bush during the presidential campaign of 2000.<sup>84</sup> As noted previously, they feel that this type of endorsement is improper partisanship. In rebuttal, former Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Charles Krulak writes:

Just because 100 retired military chose to form a coalition to help elect President Bush...all operating under the Constitution they swore to uphold during their time in service...that doesn't mean the military is becoming "too influential in politics." That particular effort just meant that 100 retired military officers believed strongly that the Gore administration would continue the Defense Strategy of the Clinton administration and that would be bad for our Nation...It had nothing to do with Party...it had everything to do with platform.<sup>85</sup>

## **5. Marine Officers' Opinions on Partisanship**

Since this study focuses on the voting behavior of Marine officers, it is important to explore how Marine officers feel about political partisanship. Examining articles and letters written for *Marine Corps Gazette*, the professional journal of Marine officers, reveals the opinions of several Marine officers regarding political involvement.

On completing a fellowship in the office of the Speaker of the House of Representatives, Lieutenant Colonel Drew Bennett writes:

There is a difference between politics and partisanship. Active duty military personnel are prohibited from using their authority or influence to solicit votes for a particular candidate or issue....Marines must not be

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<sup>81</sup> John E. Greenwood, "Editorial: Managing Military Mindsets," *Marine Corps Gazette*, May 2000, 4.

<sup>82</sup> John Hillen and Mackubin Thomas Owens, "'Gaps,' Imagined and Real: American Society and the Military Ethos," Online Newshour Forum: Civil-Military Gap, November 1999, <http://www.pbs.org/newshour>.

<sup>83</sup> Betros, 516.

<sup>84</sup> Bacevich and Kohn, 24.

<sup>85</sup> General Charles C. Krulak USMC (ret) e-mail.



partisan, but the Marine Corps does need to maintain an active and healthy relationship with the broad spectrum of elected political leaders without regard to party or ideology.<sup>86</sup>

According to Lieutenant Colonel Bennett, the Marines still provide the president with his band, his helicopters, his sentries, and is still the “force of choice” for many types of missions.<sup>87</sup> Marines also keep close ties with Congress. Since its establishment in 1775, the Marine Corps has relied on Congress to keep it from extinction. Congressional legislation results in force levels, funding, and equipment. As Lieutenant Colonel Bennett writes: “The Marine Corps does not have a Republican, Democratic, or Independent Party agenda. The oath of enlistment requires that Marines pledge to support and defend the Constitution and obey the orders of the President—not a specific political party.”<sup>88</sup>

An “Ethical Decision Problem,” presented in the December 1998 *Marine Corps Gazette*, dealt specifically with political behavior. Five scenarios were presented for readers to think about. The scenarios involved a Sergeant Major starting an e-mail campaign to lobby Congress, a Lieutenant telling a Clinton joke to his platoon, an officer club and dinner party discussion that expressed disgust with the Democrats, and a commander playing Rush Limbaugh over loudspeakers to his Marines. A Marine lawyer provided legal evaluations of these actions and determined most of these activities are violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice or against Department of Defense directives, with the private conversations being the lone exceptions. Two-hundred officers provided their opinions and almost all agreed that action should be taken “to reestablish the correct apolitical tone throughout the command.”<sup>89</sup>

Further opinions on partisanship are reflected by a Marine Corps Major who believes academics and political activists would use the perceived “civil-military gap”

to associate the American military with one partisan political agenda or another. In an increasingly politicized domestic environment, our political

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<sup>86</sup> Bennett, 53.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 54.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 54.

<sup>89</sup> “Ethical Decision Problem #16,” *Marine Corps Gazette*, December 1998, 50 and 60.

objectivity is our most valued asset. We should surrender it neither to forced political characterizations, nor to the seduction of publicly supporting a partisan agenda that coincides with our own....Political activism and an elitist mentality are poisons we must not imbibe.<sup>90</sup>

Just prior to the presidential election, in September 2000, the *Marine Corps Gazette* published Captain Robert Bracknell's article, "The Marine Officer's Moral and Legal Imperative of Political Abstinence." Captain Bracknell intended his article to remind Marine officers of their responsibilities and obligations as the election approached. Referring to two Marine officers who wrote disparaging articles about President Clinton during the impeachment scandal, he explains the legal and ethical reasons why Marines should not speak out against the President as well as why they cannot be politically active. He writes: "We are, by design and by history's decree, a nonpolitical Corps of Marines."<sup>91</sup> Bracknell emphasizes Marines must remain a corps of professional warriors ready to obey orders at a moment's notice whose loyalty to civilian control is beyond question. He also refers to an e-mail from the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Dake. General Dake's e-mail was sent to all Marine general officers in response to newspaper articles claiming Marine officers were starting petitions to impeach President Clinton. The general wanted to:

emphatically discourage such actions. As a Corps we must remain focused on our responsibility as a professional military organization which serves at the calling of the American people. It is unethical for individuals who wear the uniform of a Marine to engage in public dialogues on political and legal matters such as impeachment...As a Corps we must remain aloof of the distractions which will surely continue over the next months...We are not politicians. We are not a Corps of lawyers. We are warriors, nothing more, nothing less.<sup>92</sup>

It should be noted that, a Marine Corps Order specifically forbids Marines from participating in the kind of behavior that characterizes partisan interest groups such as

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<sup>90</sup> "Additional Responses to HB#11-The Civilian-Military Cultural Gap-Does it Exist?," *Marine Corps Gazette*, January 2000, 16.

<sup>91</sup> Robert G. Bracknell, "The Marine Officer's Moral and Legal Imperative of Political Abstinence," *Marine Corps Gazette*, September 2000, 105.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*, 106.

labor unions.<sup>93</sup> Marines are encouraged to exercise their franchise, but they are prohibited from partisan activities such as soliciting votes in an official capacity, speaking at rallies, and working for partisan campaigns, just to name a few. According to the order, just about the only thing a Marine can do is to put a bumper sticker on his or her car and vote.<sup>94</sup> Marines are not given voting guidance, as is often the case in unions and civilian organizations, and Marine Corps leaders do not promise votes or endorse any candidate. As General Charles Krulak emphasizes: “The Marine Corps does not ‘openly identify’ with the Republican Party!”<sup>95</sup>

## **B. WHAT IS THE EFFECT OF MILITARY ETHOS ON VOTE?**

Soldiers are not as other men....War is...fought by men whose values and skills are not those of politicians and diplomats. They are those of a world apart, a very ancient world, which exists in parallel with the everyday world but does not belong to it. Both worlds change over time, and the warrior adapts in step to the civilian. It follows it, however, at a distance. The distance can never be closed....

John Keegan<sup>96</sup>

Much attention has been given recently to the cultural gap that appears to exist between the military and civilian society. As mentioned previously, the results of the election of 2000 suggests that American voters are fairly evenly divided across the political spectrum. Although regional differences were still quite apparent, the margin of power in both houses of Congress narrowed and the American people split almost evenly between Gore and Bush, with Gore having a slight edge in the popular vote. Some have claimed that the military, however, is far more conservative than American society and reflects it in their voting behavior. They see the military’s increasing conservatism and supposed disdain for the society they serve and protect as dangerous. They fear that the

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<sup>93</sup> Marine Corps Order 5370.7B, Political Activities, 8 March 1993.

<sup>94</sup> Marine Corps Order 5370.7B, Political Activities, 8 March 1993, 9.

<sup>95</sup> General Charles C. Krulak USMC (ret) e-mail.

<sup>96</sup> Keegan, XVI.

military—isolated, different, and alienated from the very people it defends—will be hostile to civilian control and become a society unto itself.<sup>97</sup>

### **1. The Gap: Too Extreme?**

After following a platoon through Marine Corps recruit training, Thomas Ricks discovered that the new Marines seemed to express an extreme disgust for civilian society. According to Ricks, each new Marine experienced a moment of “private loathing” for civilians.<sup>98</sup> Understanding the Marines have always been the most insular of the services, Ricks is still concerned that,

over the last thirty years, as American culture has grown more fragmented, individualistic, and consumerist, the Marines have become more withdrawn....Today’s Marines give off a strong sense of disdain for the very society they protect. They view it...as decadent.<sup>99</sup>

Ricks believes the Marines look down on civilian society in a way that the pre-World War II military never did and that this isolation and increased conservatism can become dangerous when Marines are politically active.<sup>100</sup> Sara Lister, Assistant Secretary of the Army during the Clinton administration, expressed a similar sentiment when she said:

I think the Army is much more connected to society than the Marines are. The Marines are extremists. Whenever you have extremists you’ve got some risks of total disconnection with society. And that’s a little dangerous.<sup>101</sup>

What is this “disconnection,” this gap, between Marine and civilian cultures to which Lister and others refer? Should the nation be concerned that the Marines have such a strong and different culture? Does the Marine Corps culture affect the voting behavior of its members?

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<sup>97</sup> Ricks, “On American Soil,” 25.

<sup>98</sup> Thomas E. Ricks, Making the Corps (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997), 231.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 22.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid., 23.

<sup>101</sup> Rowan Scarborough, “Top Army woman apologizes for calling Marines ‘extremists’: Veterans, Gingrich, others on Hill demand she be fired,” Washington Times, 14 November 1997, 1.

## 2. What is the Gap?

To begin with, what is military culture? As defined in American Military Culture in the Twenty-First Century:

Military culture is an amalgam of values, customs, traditions, and their philosophical underpinnings that, over time, has created a shared institutional ethos. From military culture springs a common framework for those in uniform and common expectations regarding standards of behavior, discipline, teamwork, loyalty, selfless duty, and the customs that support these elements.<sup>102</sup>

A distinctive strong culture is vital to the building of cohesion and esprit de corps, and is the bedrock of military effectiveness and success in battle.<sup>103</sup>

What are the Corps' values and how do they compare with those of civilian society? The Marine Corps Values Program Order has this to say:

The world and society have changed significantly over the past two decades, and we as an institution must join the battle with America's families, churches, and schools to help instill fundamental values in today's youth....Our goal is to continue to produce Marines who are exemplary citizens and who will act honorably and intelligently, whatever their situation or level of responsibilities. All Marines are expected to epitomize that which is good about our Nation and to personify the ideals upon which it was founded. Honor, Courage, and Commitment are not just words; they frame the way Marines are to live and act.<sup>104</sup>

The core values of honor, courage, and commitment are at the heart of Marine Corps culture, and in a time of what some describe as "moral relativism," they may seem out of date.<sup>105</sup> In discussing these core values and the comments of Lister, Toner writes: "The notion that the Corps, in its belief that Marines should have such virtues, is somehow 'extremist' is not only unfair but petty. And the honorable former assistant secretary is thus both wrong and wrong-headed."<sup>106</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> American Military Culture, XVIII.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid, XV.

<sup>104</sup> Marine Corps Order 1500.56, Marine Corps Values Program, 16 December 1996.

<sup>105</sup> Snider, Nagl, and Pfaff, "Army Professionalism."

<sup>106</sup> James H. Toner, "Paene Semper Fidelis," Marine Corps Gazette, November 1998, 48-49.

In contrast to Marine Corps culture, it is becoming increasingly difficult to define American civilian culture. Today, many social trends are seen as contributing to what some describe as social “decay” in America and a rejection of traditional moral standards.<sup>107</sup> However civilian culture may be defined, it is clear that differences do exist between the Marine Corps and civilian society. In explaining, “Why the Gap Matters,” Cohen writes:

Military officers, researchers found, doubt that the civilian world values the same things they do, and perhaps they have a point. The requirements of self-sacrifice, discipline, loyalty, and altruism demanded by military service cannot be squared with a society that, though brimming with energy, celebrates the opposite values of acquisition, individuality, career and geographic mobility, and self-actualization.<sup>108</sup>

The differences between the professional military and civilian society are not new. Evidence can be found that the values of the professional military and those of civilian society have always been at odds since the founding of our nation.<sup>109</sup> For example, Huntington and others have shown that the military has a history of being an estranged minority within America’s liberal society during times of peace. According to Clotfelter, the typical American attitude toward the peacetime military is reflected by a contemporary of Thomas Jefferson who said: “I never want to see the face of [a military man] in our cities and intermixed with the people.”<sup>110</sup> History has shown that Americans, although patriotic, prefer to think of themselves as peace-loving people and unless embarked on a crusade, tend to become apathetic about their military.<sup>111</sup> In looking at the 1920s and 1930s, Samuel Huntington found the army at odds with civilians, as army officers found “military and civilian ethics fundamentally incompatible.”<sup>112</sup> At the time, an Army officer remarked: “The soldier and the civilian

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<sup>107</sup> James F. McIsaac and Naomi Verdugo, “Civil-Military Relations: A Domestic Perspective,” in U.S. Civil-Military Relations: In Crisis or Transition?, edited by Don M. Snider and Miranda A. Carlton-Carew (Washington, D. C.: The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1995) , 22.

<sup>108</sup> Cohen, 42.

<sup>109</sup> Westermann.

<sup>110</sup> Clotfelter, 19.

<sup>111</sup> Huntington, 151-152.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 309.

belong to separate classes of society. The code of the soldier can never be the same as that of the civilian, why try to mingle them?"<sup>113</sup> Clotfelter offers another comment reflecting the distance that develops between civilians and the military. He cites a Navy officer of the 1920s who found that his uniform was often "mistaken for that of a railroad gateman, a bus conductor, or a messenger boy."<sup>114</sup> The peacetime period between the world wars is very similar to today. Huntington asserts that, during the 1920s and 1930s, civilian morals were perceived as in decay, there was "too much hedonism, too little idealism and religion," and the military felt alienated and under attack by liberal scholars, writers, and philosophers.<sup>115</sup> Post-World War II isolation of the military is reflected in T. R. Fehrenbach's description of America's problems in the Korean War, when he writes: "Perhaps the values that comprise a decent civilization and those needed to defend it abroad will always be at odds."<sup>116</sup>

In contrast to Ricks' anecdotal experience with Marines' "disdain" for civilians, a survey conducted in 2000 by the Center for Strategic and International Studies found the military had a mostly positive attitude toward civilian society. Eighty-eight percent of military personnel in the survey support socializing with civilians, 75 percent believed the military had a great deal of respect for civilians, and 80 percent felt their hometown had a high regard for the military.<sup>117</sup>

### **3. Why a Different Culture?**

As previously observed, the Marine Corps is in many ways unique among America's armed forces. It has the strongest service culture, partly because its very culture is what makes the Marines so singular, and partly because of its small size. Ricks writes: "The Marines are distinct even within the separate world of the U.S. military.

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<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 310.

<sup>114</sup> Clotfelter, 22.

<sup>115</sup> Huntington, 312.

<sup>116</sup> T. R. Fehrenbach, This Kind of War: A Study in Unpreparedness (New York: MacMillan, 1963), XI.

<sup>117</sup> American Military Culture, 33.

Theirs is a culture apart....Culture—that is, the values and assumptions that shape its members—is all the Marines have.”<sup>118</sup> Lieutenant General Victor H. Krulak adds:

In the American military establishment they were perennially the smallest kid on the block in a hostile neighborhood...they evolved an elite, almost mystical institutional personality. Partaking variously of pride, aggressiveness, dedication, loyalty, discipline, and courage, this complex personality was—and is—dominated by a conviction that battle is the Marines’ only reason for existence and that they must be ready to respond promptly and effectively whenever given an opportunity to fight. Finally, they came to accept, as an article of faith, that marines must not only be better than everyone else but different as well.<sup>119</sup>

It is this dedication to warfighting that defines the Marine Corps culture and is the foundation of what Marines believe and value.<sup>120</sup>

Understanding how the Marine Corps instills its culture into its recruits may help to explain what Ricks saw when he followed new Marines into the civilian world. The Marine Corps is known for having tough recruit training and maintaining high standards.<sup>121</sup> Military training, as Richard Holmes explains functions “to inculcate the military ethos in recruits, and to ensure the individual values which prevail in most civilian societies are replaced by the group spirit and group loyalties which underlie all military organizations.”<sup>122</sup> Lieutenant General Krulak writes: “Young adults from diverse areas of the country and backgrounds are immersed in an environment wherein they are able to perceive, understand, and finally accept as dogma the essential Marine Corps virtues.”<sup>123</sup> Krulak notes that, through shared hardship and deprivation, the recruit depots, officer candidate school, and the basic school, impress upon Marines and their officers with the fact that they belong to a corps apart and the finest fighting force in the world. Trainees are taught its history of valor, its traditions, and its customs. They are

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<sup>118</sup> Ricks, Making the Corps, 19.

<sup>119</sup> Victor H. Krulak, First to Fight: An Inside View of the U.S. Marine Corps (Annapolis, Maryland: Naval Institute Press, 1984) , 3.

<sup>120</sup> “Making Marines & Winning Battles...Since 1775,” [www.usmc.mil](http://www.usmc.mil).

<sup>121</sup> Krulak, 159.

<sup>122</sup> Richard Holmes, Acts of War: The Behavior of Men in Battle (New York: The Free Press, 1985) , 36.

<sup>123</sup> Krulak, 159.



taught that, on becoming Marines, they will have entered an exclusive fraternity of warriors.<sup>124</sup> As a Marine Corps publication says: “We take America’s young men and women and imbue in them our ethos, our core values....We transform them into Marines. This transformation process lasts forever.”<sup>125</sup>

Articles in the *Marine Corps Gazette* may explain why Marines are so protective of their warrior culture and seek to maintain the cultural gap. According to Huntington, the U.S. military has historically felt pressured to be more like civilian culture. According to Huntington, liberal American society believes that “if armed forces must be maintained, they should be utilized to further other socially desirable objectives.”<sup>126</sup> And Fehrenbach observes:

Liberal society, in its heart, wants not only dominance of the military, but acquiescence of the military towards its liberal way of life. Dominance and control society should have but acquiescence society may not have, if it wants an army worth a damn. By the very nature of its mission, the military must maintain a hard and illiberal view of life and the world. Society’s purpose is to live; the military’s is to stand ready, if need be, to die.<sup>127</sup>

This conflict in objectives is evident in a number of articles and letters from the *Marine Corps Gazette* during the 1990s. Many emphasized the need for the Marine Corps to retain its warrior culture and to resist civilian efforts at “political correctness” and cultural change for the sake of social experimentation. Examples of these articles include:

- “Cultural (R)Evolution”
- “ID’ing Our Cultural Centers of Gravity”
- “Managing Military Mindsets”
- “A Cultural Dilemma”

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid., 159-174.

<sup>125</sup> “Making Marines & Winning Battles...Since 1775,” [www.usmc.mil](http://www.usmc.mil).

<sup>126</sup> Huntington, 157.

<sup>127</sup> Fehrenbach, 292.

In “Cultural (R)Evolution,” Berens criticizes social engineering, political correctness, and feminization of the military as “fads of a softened society.”<sup>128</sup> In “ID’ing Our Cultural Centers of Gravity,” Shelton writes that there are aspects of Marine culture to be defended, citing the concept that Marines are Marines twenty-four hours a day and prohibited from the “pernicious” quality of life initiatives that allow members of other services to wear earrings off-duty. Shelton believes it is the culture that reinforces “the values and norms that make us Marines.”<sup>129</sup> The *Marine Corps Gazette* editorial, “Managing Military Mindsets,” bemoans the adverse impact of the current “social engineering” and emphasizes the importance of the warrior ethos.<sup>130</sup> And in “A Cultural Dilemma,” Nemeth writes that political correctness and bureaucracy have won over warrior culture and that “the Marine Corps has been through extensive and quite frankly, disheartening cultural changes....To placate those that advocate a politically correct, kinder, and gentler military is not only unfortunate, but also frightening.”<sup>131</sup>

Marines were asked by the *Marine Corps Gazette* to offer their opinions of the civil-military gap as a “hot button” issue. One Marine thought it was nothing new and could be handled by good leadership. Another felt the “gap” argument is flawed, since the United States does not have a homogeneous culture to compare with the Marine Corps. Instead, he argues that the Marines’ culture is just the distilled values of the silent majority of Americans and that it is the liberals in the government and media who perpetuate the values divide for their own ends. At the same time, a Marine major contends that “the real danger is the purpose to which academia and political activists will use the perceived civilian-military cultural gap.”<sup>132</sup>

An enlightening article was one by the Commandant of the Marine Corps, written in response to an officer’s e-mail. A first lieutenant sent an e-mail to then-Commandant,

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<sup>128</sup> Robert J. Berens, “Cultural (R)Evolution,” *Marine Corps Gazette*, August 2000, 24.

<sup>129</sup> Paul A. Shelton, “Identifying Our Cultural Centers of Gravity,” *Marine Corps Gazette*, August 2000, 28.

<sup>130</sup> John E. Greenwood, “Editorial: Managing Military Mindsets,” *Marine Corps Gazette*, May, 2000, 4.

<sup>131</sup> William J. Nemeth, “A Cultural Dilemma,” *Marine Corps Gazette*, January 1999, 18.

<sup>132</sup> “Selected Responses to HB#11-The Civilian-Military Cultural Gap-Does it Exist?,” *Marine Corps Gazette*, December 1999, 12-13. and “Additional Responses to HB#11-The Civilian-Military Cultural Gap-Does it Exist?,” *Marine Corps Gazette*, January 2000, 16.

General Krulak, stating his desire to get out of the Marine Corps because, “unfortunately, our Corps has been overrun by those attempting to make the Corps a reflection of our society as regards to race, gender, etc. We have lost our focus as warfighters.” General Krulak responded that, not only had the Corps maintained its standards relative to those of the other services, but it had actually raised them by elevating recruiting standards, making boot camp longer, and raising the physical fitness test requirements for women, among other initiatives. General Krulak writes:

And if you think we haven’t had to fight to do all of this—higher standards, longer training, the Crucible, gender-segregated—then you are really missing the boat....We are holding the standard, holding the line. While all the other Services are caving in to what is politically correct, your Corps is standing tall and firm!<sup>133</sup>

#### **4. How the Gap Affects the Military Vote**

Because Marines believe fervently in the importance of their warrior culture, politicians or interest groups who criticize Marine culture actually influence Marine officers’ voting behavior. Hillen and Owens contend that the goal of some Democrats, such as Representative Patricia Schroeder, has been to destroy military culture. This was supposedly indicated when she “gleefully announced during the Navy’s Tailhook travails that the Service’s problems represented ‘the sound of a culture cracking.’”<sup>134</sup> Perhaps, in the minds of Marines, “liberal Democrats” were the perpetrators of the political correctness they so fear. As Donnelly writes: “The Clinton years have confirmed the irredeemable dislike of Democrats for the military, with the battle turning...to a clash of cultures.”<sup>135</sup> When given the opportunity to express their opinion at the ballot box, Marines may then vote for candidates who do not pose a threat to maintaining the Marine culture. Over forty years ago, Janowitz wrote: “The simple-minded marine colonel who boasts that his profession is to kill is an anachronism.”<sup>136</sup> While Marines may still be

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<sup>133</sup> Adam T. Strickland, “Concerns of an Officer,” Charles C. Krulak, “The Commandant Responds,” *Marine Corps Gazette*, December 1997, 38-39.

<sup>134</sup> Hillen and Owens, 5.

<sup>135</sup> Donnelly, 2.

<sup>136</sup> Janowitz, 225.

anachronisms, their “simple-minded,” or perhaps more accurately, single-minded, devotion to war continues to shape their culture and opinions.

### **C. PRESIDENT CLINTON AND MARINE OFFICERS’ VOTES**

The presidency is not merely an administrative office. That is the least part of it. It is preeminently a place of moral leadership.  
Franklin Delano Roosevelt<sup>137</sup>

#### **1. President Clinton Versus the Military**

From the beginning of his administration, President Clinton had a troublesome relationship with the military. From his seeming avoidance of service during the Vietnam War, to his campaign promise to lift the military’s ban on homosexuals, seeds of mistrust were planted in the military even before he took office.<sup>138</sup> Furthermore, President Clinton’s eight years in office were marked by continued poor relations with the military. The characteristic trend of the Clinton years, at least in the minds of many military members, was increased military deployments in the face of shrinking defense resources.<sup>139</sup> In addition, his time in office was marked by what a number of military officers considered an assault on their warrior culture.<sup>140</sup> And although his presidency survived the Monica Lewinsky scandal, military officers’ opinions of the president’s leadership skills and character suffered.<sup>141</sup> In private, military officers may have asked, “Why isn’t he, as Commander-in-Chief, being held to the same standard applied to us?” During the 2000 presidential campaign, Democrats claimed the military was stronger than ever, while Republicans cited declining readiness and morale.<sup>142</sup> Clinton’s presidency may have affected Marine officers’ voting behavior in two ways during the election of 2000. First, Marines may have been concerned with the effect his presidency

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<sup>137</sup> Michael Novak, Choosing Presidents: Symbols of Political Leadership (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1992) , 55.

<sup>138</sup> Eitelberg and Little, 49.

<sup>139</sup> Snider, Nagl, and Pfaff, 6.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>141</sup> Sam C. Sarkesian and Robert E. Connor Jr., The US Military Profession into the Twenty-First Century: War, Peace and Politics (Portland, Oregon: Frank Cass Publishers, 1999) , 11.

<sup>142</sup> “A Case for the Defense: Gore, Bush Both Hawks on Security Matters,” <http://www.ABCnews.com>, 2.

had on warfighting effectiveness. Second, Marines may have been concerned with President Clinton's leadership and character. It is easy to see how the combination of these two concerns would then have reflected on the candidacy of Al Gore and the Democratic Party that he led.

## **2. President Clinton and Warfighting Effectiveness**

The first major issue raised by Bill Clinton was lifting the ban on gays in the military. Korb writes in "The Military and Social Change" that, despite opposition from the military, Clinton was rewarded for responding to interest groups such as homosexuals during his election campaign. According to Korb, it was estimated that gays and lesbians raised four-million dollars for Clinton's campaign in 1992 and that one out of seven votes for Clinton was cast by a homosexual.<sup>143</sup> Korb asserts that the military uses "extremist logic" to resist change when its members predict dire consequences for military effectiveness. And, as Korb contends, despite the military's protests, it is correct to force social change on the armed forces because "civilians must continue to insure the military reflects the social norms of the society it defends."<sup>144</sup> This issue so disturbed senior military leaders, however, that resistance by the Joint Chiefs of Staff eventually contributed to Clinton's inability to lift the ban.<sup>145</sup>

Another example of Marines' frustration during the Clinton administration centered on the issue of women in combat, which sparked considerable debate in the pages of the *Marine Corps Gazette*. In letters, "Regarding Women in Combat," Marines expressed their concerns. A retired colonel writes: "The issue involves principles beyond justice and equal opportunity. The requirement for military effectiveness and an understanding of the primary reason for which the Nation's Armed Forces exist are the overriding considerations." A major writes that the removal of restrictions on women into combat were "sad indications as to just how successfully entrenched feminists have

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<sup>143</sup> Lawrence J. Korb, "The Military and Social Change," Project on U.S. Post Cold-War Civil-Military Relations, John M. Olin Institute for Strategic Studies, Working Paper No. 5 (Harvard University, August 1996), 29-30.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid., 41.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., 35.

become in our political and military institutions. Sound judgment has taken a back seat to their social agendas.” Another colonel writes:

This issue will never be resolved politically. There is too much at stake for both the supporters, whose interest are not combat related, and for the detractors, who have too much to lose on the battlefield....Political correctness will be the American Gallipoli if not confined to the beltway.

And a retired master sergeant observed: “Frustrations arise in men when politicians attempt to force the military to employ women as surrogate men in roles that they are not as well suited for.”<sup>146</sup>

Marines are probably typical of voters in any profession. As Segal points out, they will pursue their corporate interests in the political arena just like any other voter making a choice.<sup>147</sup> Professional soldiers are not greatly compensated monetarily, a contrast that became especially evident during the “new” booming economy of the 1990s.<sup>148</sup> Instead, they rely largely on their own self-esteem and pride in service. Nordlinger asserts that, although civilian control is internalized in professional soldiers, civilian leaders must have “due regard for the military.” Government must respect the military’s honor, expertise, autonomy, and political neutrality. Nordlinger goes on to claim the government should not slur its officers, interfere in professional military affairs, or use the military for domestic political advantage.<sup>149</sup> Huntington adds: “The statesman must recognize the integrity of the professional and its subject matter.”<sup>150</sup> Janowitz also observes that because military officers are deprived of wealth, their self-identity becomes more important. When politicians deny or destroy military officers’ self-esteem, then it increases tensions between civilians and the military.<sup>151</sup>

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<sup>146</sup> “Regarding Women in Combat,” Marine Corps Gazette, February 1998, 29-30.

<sup>147</sup> Segal, 191.

<sup>148</sup> Snider, Nagl, and Pfaff, 13.

<sup>149</sup> Nordlinger, 13.

<sup>150</sup> Huntington, 72.

<sup>151</sup> Janowitz, 248.

### 3. President Clinton's Leadership and Character

The second aspect of the Clinton presidency that relates to Marines' opinions was a prevalent view regarding his moral character. President Clinton's reputed extra-marital affairs and impeachment might have had a great impact on how Marines viewed his character and ability to serve as Commander-in-Chief. Leadership is a fundamental part of the warrior culture, especially among Marine officers. The Marine Corps order on leadership training states:

The primary goal of Marine Corps leadership is to instill in all Marines the fact that they are warriors first. The only reason the United States of America needs a Marine Corps is to fight and win wars. Everything else is secondary.

Its purpose is also to foster application of leadership principles, in particular leadership by example, and to develop, "proper moral and ethical behavior."<sup>152</sup>

In *Choosing Presidents*, Novak sees the American president as symbolizing a king, high priest, and prophet. And he believes Americans react with passion as to what the president represents. According to Novak, the symbolic power of the president is real and the "way he lives affects our image of ourselves."<sup>153</sup> What President Clinton did during his time in office symbolized different things to different people, and Marines' perceptions of what he "stood for" were sure to affect their opinions. Kohn writes that Bill Clinton was a president "with less experience, interest, understanding, and credibility in military affairs than any since the 1920s." And that his presidency had soured civil-military relations to the point where no commander-in-chief had ever been "so disliked or so reviled, or spoken of with such contempt and dislike by the professional military."<sup>154</sup> As Stone also observes:

For eight years, many in the military have felt discomfort when saluting their commander in chief. They regard President Clinton as a draft dodger whose moral authority has been lacking on everything from his push to let gays serve openly in the military to his affair with Monica Lewinsky.<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Marine Corps Order 5390.2D, Leadership Training and Education, 12 June 1989, 2.

<sup>153</sup> Novak, 3.

<sup>154</sup> Kohn, "Out of Control," 4 and 13.

<sup>155</sup> Stone.

Eitelberg and Little show that Clinton's troubled relationship with the military became a focus of attention by the news media.<sup>156</sup> As the first of the "baby boomers" to be elected President, President Clinton was viewed with suspicion by the military establishment and linked to a decades-old remark that he was "sympathetic toward those who 'loved their country but loathed the military.'" As it turned out, his early first-term staff contained almost no veterans. In fact, the press reported a "prevalent view that Mr. Clinton and his staff neither understand military life nor like military people."<sup>157</sup> Several unfortunate incidents between the White House staff and military members appeared to demonstrate in the least, an insensitivity or lack of understanding regarding the military.<sup>158</sup>

Two Marine officers published articles criticizing President Clinton and his character. One referred to President Clinton as a "known criminal," a "morally defective leader," "a lying draft dodger," "hypocrite-in-chief," and "perhaps the most selfish man ever to disgrace our presidency."<sup>159</sup> These articles highlight how President Clinton's misbehavior might have affected Marine officers. Captain Bracknell's *Marine Corps Gazette* article on these incidents explains why the two officers were wrong to publicly rebuke the president but also what motivated them to do so:

It is true that Marines like to speak out. We sometimes see our core values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment as requirements to take on the establishment in the name of righteousness and morality. We like to fix what we perceive as wrong. In the arena of politics, however, Marine officers must suppress that urge because the law and our tradition as professional warriors so command. Our core values demand that we remain publicly indifferent to the political fray so that America and her elected head of state harbor no doubts of our loyalty.<sup>160</sup>

This article did provoke responses from other officers, however, that rejected complete silence by Marines regarding President Clinton's leadership. One believed Marines needed to have moral courage and stand up for what was right, citing the

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<sup>156</sup> Eitelberg and Little, 50.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid., 49.

<sup>158</sup> Eitelberg and Little, 49.

<sup>159</sup> Bracknell, 106.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid., 105.



German army's failure to stop Hitler. As this officer observed, loyalty to the president "shouldn't be unconditional loyalty where inappropriate conduct can't be criticized." Another officer wrote that, if his commanding officer had done something bad, he would offer honest, respectful criticism, because

we are United States Marines, not Ceasar's (sic) Praetorian Guards, and our unconditional loyalty should never lie with any one man or group of men, especially when their moral behavior is in question. Our unconditional loyalty must be to our country, our Constitution, and the American people we serve.<sup>161</sup>

Why would President Clinton's misadventures provoke such emotional responses from Marine officers? As Novak writes:

The president of the United States is one of the great symbolic powers known to history. His actions seep irrepressibly into our hearts. He dwells in us. That is why we wrestle against him, rise up in hatred often, wish toretch.<sup>162</sup>

Marine Corps officers are taught to be leaders, including morally and physically. Excerpts from a Marine leadership publication illuminate where Marine officers derive their beliefs and help to explain their opinions of President Clinton's behavior. Honor, courage, and commitment, the Marines' core values, constitute the basis of their leadership concepts. According to the order, "a leader who lies—or even slightly distorts the truth...is being dishonorable and unethical."<sup>163</sup> Leadership traits and principles include: integrity, judgment, setting the example, and seeking responsibility and taking responsibility for one's actions.<sup>164</sup> Another enlightening passage says, "Marine Corps leadership includes inspirational personal example of high moral standards reflecting virtue, honor, moral responsibility, personal adherence to high standards of conduct and

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<sup>161</sup> "Letters on Political Abstinence," Marine Corps Gazette, December 2000, 12-13.

<sup>162</sup> Novak, 5.

<sup>163</sup> "Values," Leadership: Readings and Discussions, Publication B0609, United States Marine Corps, The Basic School, (Quantico, Virginia: Marine Corps Combat Development Command, 1986), p. 2-B-6.

<sup>164</sup> "Philosophy of Leadership," Leadership: Readings and Discussions, Publication B0606, United States Marine Corps, The Basic School, (Quantico, Virginia: Marine Corps Combat Development Command, 1986), p. 1-3.

the guidance of subordinates towards wholesomeness of mind and body.”<sup>165</sup> These are the standards Marine officers have set for themselves. Should they apply to the President?

Although the President is the Commander-in-Chief, he is still a civilian and not subject to the strict laws of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, where adultery and sodomy are still punishable offenses. In the wake of such recent events as the Kelly Flinn controversy and the Aberdeen scandal, military officers testified that this “double standard” of acceptable behavior was hurting morale.<sup>166</sup> The majority of Americans, however, seemed to be able to separate President Clinton’s private mistakes from his performance as President, since his approval rating still remained above seventy percent in 1999.<sup>167</sup> Sarkesian and Connor note that, in this sense, it is a conflict of values and goes back to the differences in military and civilian culture. Sarkesian and Connor write: “For most in the military profession, performance in an official capacity is inseparable from the ‘whole’ man or woman, encompassing character, conduct, honor, trust, and loyalty.”<sup>168</sup> And that while publicly silent, some military leaders acknowledged “privately...that the president’s adulterous affairs and misleading statements may cause a devastating and irrecoverable erosion in his standing among service members and further damage sagging morale in the ranks.”<sup>169</sup> Sarkesian and Connor further observe: “It is also clear that the commander-in-chief is a critical reference point for the military; he/she must epitomize the character and conduct expected of military professionals. One cannot expect less from those who send military men and women into harm’s way.”<sup>170</sup> Although speaking about a different topic, General Krulak’s remarks at a conference regarding women in the military are relevant. According to General Krulak:

There is no room for so-called ‘situational’ ethics in the profession of arms. That is why we have drawn a clear line between acceptable and

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<sup>165</sup> Ibid., p. 1-A-1.

<sup>166</sup> Sarkesian and Connor Jr., 174.

<sup>167</sup> Sarkesian and Connor Jr., 175.

<sup>168</sup> Ibid., 174-175.

<sup>169</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid., 182.

unacceptable conduct. Policies on adultery and fraternization must be clear and consistently enforced. Double standards cannot be tolerated.<sup>171</sup>

After the 2000 election, military personnel felt free to offer comments about President Clinton and their feelings became more evident. For example, when President George W. Bush visited military bases during his early weeks in office, one Marine commented about President Clinton: “You don’t necessarily have to be in the Marines to be a good commander in chief, but it helps if you don’t hate our guts.” Another Marine went on to say: “I was just so sick and tired of the way Clinton treated the military.”<sup>172</sup> These remarks suggest that President Clinton left a largely negative impression on the military, whether justified or not.

#### **D. EFFECT OF PEER PRESSURE**

...Apart from monastic orders there is no comparable social body that so sets its stamp, for so much of a man’s life, on every individual belonging to it.  
Be’eri<sup>173</sup>

Why would such a large majority of military officers vote for the same candidate and favor the same party? Besides some of the possible reasons cited above, officers might be influenced by peer pressure or socialization.

##### **1. Social Group Voting Behavior**

Research on voting behavior has shown that people in the same social groups and of the same socioeconomic backgrounds tend to vote the similarly. As Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet write: “Voting is essentially a group experience. People who work or live or play together are likely to vote for the same candidates.”<sup>174</sup> They go on to note that “people who live together under similar external conditions are likely to develop

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<sup>171</sup> Charles C. Krulak, “It is an Issue of Standards,” Draft remarks for The 1999 Defense Advisory Committee on Women in the Services Conference, Herndon, Virginia, 29 April 1999.

<sup>172</sup> Joseph Curl, “Military Finds Refreshing Change With New Commander in Chief,” The Washington Times, 15 February 2001, 1.

<sup>173</sup> Eliezer Be’eri, Army Officers in Arab Politics and Society (New York: Praeger, 1970) , 294.

<sup>174</sup> Paul f. Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson, and Hazel Gaudet, The People’s Choice: How the Voter Makes Up His Mind in a Presidential Campaign (New York: Columbia University Press, 1944) , 137.

similar needs and interests. They tend to see the world through the same colored glasses; they tend to apply to common experiences common interpretations.”<sup>175</sup> Marine officers obviously belong to a tight-knit, cohesive social group. They also tend to come from conservative or military families, and certain regions of the country that are more Republican.<sup>176</sup> In this sense, the majority of officers preferring the Republican Party could result from self-selection of Republicans based on demographic factors and a desire to belong to the same social group, that is, the military.

## **2. Peer Pressure**

In addition, there could also be peer pressure to conform to cultural norms. Nordlinger believes that, in the military,

political attitudes are then maintained and further strengthened by conformist pressure—pressures that are more forcefully felt than in almost any other political group. For the military comes close to being a ‘total institution’: officers work and live within its confines, military life is sharply differentiated from civilian life, officers are often segregated and occasionally isolated from civilians, and they remain within the same institution throughout their careers.

Nordlinger also asserts that the fusion of personal and military life to foster cohesion and “brotherhood” makes it very difficult for deviant officers to challenge prevailing norms in political beliefs.<sup>177</sup> Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet also found that “during the campaign social groups imbue their individual members with the accepted political ideology of the group.”<sup>178</sup> The authors assert that people will adjust their voting intentions to conform with their group and that, “people vote, not only *with* their social group, but also *for* it.” And that some people may “acquiesce to the political temper of their group under the steady, personal influence of their more politically active fellow citizens.”<sup>179</sup> Although law prohibits political indoctrination in the military, informal social pressures may obviously come to bear. There is evidence that military voters tend

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<sup>175</sup> Ibid., 148.

<sup>176</sup> Betros, 511. Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet, 18.

<sup>177</sup> Nordlinger, 61.

<sup>178</sup> Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet, 147.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid., 148-149.

to believe that their comrades vote for the same candidate as they do. For example, in talking to soldiers about absentee ballots in Florida, Eckenrode found that “when the final votes come in, they said they expect their overseas counterparts to have voted the same way they did.”<sup>180</sup>

## **E. WHAT WERE OFFICERS’ OPINIONS OF THE CANDIDATES?**

The election of a president is an almost religious task; it intimately affects the life of the spirit, our identity. Who the man is determines in real measure who we are.  
Michael Novak<sup>181</sup>

Ultimately, the presidential election of 2000 was a contest between Texas Governor George W. Bush and Vice President Al Gore. What was the impression these candidates made on people in the military and why?

A sample of articles written before and after the election reflects how people in the military might have felt about the candidates:

- “Teamsters back Gore; Bush gets a military boost,” *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, September 8, 2000.
- “Military Backs Ex-Guard Pilot Over Pvt. Gore,” *The New York Times*, September 21, 2000.
- “Military Vote in Florida Could Cement Bush Victory,” [www.newsmax.com](http://www.newsmax.com), November 9, 2000.
- “Military voters support Bush,” [www.augustachronicle.com](http://www.augustachronicle.com), November 11, 2000.
- “Why Soldiers Dislike Democrats,” [www.weeklystandard.com](http://www.weeklystandard.com), December 4, 2000.
- “Bush gets cheers in the barracks,” *USA Today*, January 8, 2001.

### **1. A Battle of “Hawks”**

Although Gore and Bush differed in many respects, the presidential race was “a battle of hawks when it comes to defense.”<sup>182</sup> Comparing the candidates’ platforms

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<sup>180</sup> Vicky Eckenrode, “Military voters support Bush,” *The Augusta Chronicle*, 11 November 2000, 3.

<sup>181</sup> Novak, 4.

<sup>182</sup> “A Case for the Defense: Gore, Bush Both Hawks on Security Matters,” [www.abcnews.com](http://www.abcnews.com), 1.

showed that Gore was traditionally a pro-defense democrat, one of only ten democratic senators to vote in favor of the Gulf War, a proponent of missile defense, and promised 100 billion dollars for defense during the campaign. Bush on the other hand was also a proponent of missile defense and promised 47 billion dollars for defense.<sup>183</sup> Since both candidates advocated a strong defense, the major issue during the campaign became the state of the nation's military under the Clinton-Gore administration. Accordingly: "Bush...sought to make an issue out of the country's military preparedness, saying the Clinton administration has hurt troop morale and neglected to keep the armed forces in top shape."<sup>184</sup> Bush was supported in these claims by former generals Schwarzkopf and Powell who, serving under Bush's father, had orchestrated the U.S. victory in the Gulf War. Gore vigorously disputed Bush's claims, citing a 4.8 percent military pay increase enacted under the Clinton-Gore administration.<sup>185</sup>

Bush claimed the Clinton-Gore team had presided over a "military in decline."<sup>186</sup> According to Newman, Bush's claims were bolstered by a study that indicated people in the military were frustrated by shortages of spare parts and equipment.<sup>187</sup> Gore pointed to Clinton's approval of a 112 billion dollar increase in defense spending and claimed America's armed force "is the strongest and the best in the entire world."<sup>188</sup> Newman writes:

Undeniably so. But the US military's vast menu of missions makes comparisons with any other single force oversimplistic. No other military is required to be ready to fight and win two separate wars while conducting indefinite missions in the Balkans and the Persian Gulf, relief operations wherever they pop up, and exercises with numerous other nations.<sup>189</sup>

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<sup>183</sup> Ibid., 1.

<sup>184</sup> "A Case for the Defense," 2.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>186</sup> Richard J. Newman, "Paying attention to military's needs," U.S. News & World Report, 4 September 2000.

<sup>187</sup> American Military Culture, 2.

<sup>188</sup> Newman.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

A poll of nearly 76,000 people taken by Vote.com asked who was right about the state of the military. Ninety-two percent of the respondents felt Bush was right saying “the next president would inherit a military in decline,” while only eight percent felt the Clinton-Gore administration was correct in saying, “we’ve got the finest fighting force in history.”<sup>190</sup> Bush also had the support of retired general Colin Powell who said: “The ones who are attacking the military are those who pretend that everything is OK...it’s time to face reality.”<sup>191</sup> At the same time, Hutcheson and Thomma found that “Independent military experts say reality falls somewhere between the candidates’ contrasting views.”<sup>192</sup>

## **2. Al Gore**

President Clinton’s legacy to Al Gore may have been poor relations with our nation’s military. Despite Al Gore’s strong record of support for the military, the seeming assaults on the military’s culture that took place during President Clinton’s terms, coupled with the strongly negative opinions of many officers concerning President Clinton’s character and leadership, may have left a lasting impression on how military members perceived Al Gore. In many ways, candidate Gore’s identity was linked with that of President Clinton, whom he had served loyally as Vice President through two terms.

Myers writes: “Al Gore enlisted in the Army and went to Vietnam. George W. Bush joined the Texas National Guard and did not. But for many people in uniform, that makes little difference.” Myers feels soldiers gave Bush the benefit of the doubt for not serving in Vietnam while only giving grudging respect to Gore, one saying that Gore was only “a public affairs puke.”<sup>193</sup> Myers adds: “It was clear that Mr. Gore—despite his own record, his service on the Senate’s Armed Services Committee and his relatively more hawkish views on defense issues compared with other Democrats—suffered from

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<sup>190</sup> “Bush at war with Clinton-Gore: Who is right about the state of our military?” [www.vote.com](http://www.vote.com).

<sup>191</sup> Ron Hutcheson and Steve Thomma, “Teamsters back Gore; Bush gets a military boost,” The Philadelphia Inquirer, 8 September 2000, 1.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>193</sup> Myers, 2.

his association with Mr. Clinton.”<sup>194</sup> Meanwhile, many military officers were concerned that readiness problems had grown during Gore’s watch, that Gore would expand the role of women in the military, and were alarmed by his support of gays serving openly.<sup>195</sup> Despite these negative opinions, some felt that Gore had greater credibility on defense issues and understanding of military life and would have an excellent rapport with the military.<sup>196</sup> Myers quotes Retired General Charles Krulak, a Bush supporter, as agreeing, and said people in the military would “just be happy to have somebody who knows how to salute.”<sup>197</sup>

As previously noted, officers’ opinions of Gore were affected by his vow to let homosexuals serve openly in the military. During a presidential campaign debate, Peter Jennings asked Al Gore if he would make an agreement on gays in the military a “litmus test” for appointments to the joint chiefs. Gore responded, “Yes.” But Gore’s remark “angered many current and retired military officers, who charged political interference in the armed forces.” Vice President Gore later retracted the statement saying: “I did not mean to imply that there should ever be any kind of inquiry into the personal political opinions of officers in the U.S. military....What I meant to convey was I would not tolerate...orders not being followed.”<sup>198</sup> Nevertheless Senator John McCain expressed the views of many in the defense establishment when he remarked: “...any potential president who says he will choose members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff ‘to pursue a social agenda’ does not qualify for the job.”<sup>199</sup> Retired General Charles Krulak felt such a “test” would discourage officers from seeking the top post, saying: “Knowing people who have held the position before and some who serve now, there are some who would take themselves out of the running rather than submit to such a litmus test.”<sup>200</sup>

Feaver is quoted as saying that Gore already

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<sup>194</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>195</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>196</sup> Myers, 4.

<sup>197</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>198</sup> Richard Benedetto, “Gore adjusts position on gays in military,” USA Today, 10 January 2000, 1.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid., 1.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid., 2.



brought an undue amount of civil-military baggage to the White House...His campaign missteps, such as the careless promise to use attitudes toward homosexuality...in choosing the Joint Chiefs; his association with, and defense of, Bill Clinton, a commander-in-chief for whom many service members feel contempt; and his embrace of unpopular nation-building missions—all of these have grated on those in uniform.<sup>201</sup>

### **3. George W. Bush**

In contrast, Myers found that “It is Mr. Bush, not Mr. Gore, who seems to enjoy some automatic credibility with the military because of his party affiliation, his policy positions, his running mate, his advisers—and his father.” Myers asserts that Gore had far less support among military officers than did his opponent, Bush. One of the reasons for Bush’s appeal was his father, former President George Bush, “who...served ably as commander in chief during the military’s shining moment after Vietnam, the Persian Gulf War.” Myers found people in the military preferred Bush’s policy proposals, agreed with Bush’s assessment that Clinton-Gore oversaw a “military in decline,” and liked Bush’s advisers, which included former Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney and retired General Colin Powell. Myers quotes an Army colonel as saying, “People are just more comfortable with the idea of a Bush-Cheney-Powell team in the White House again.”<sup>202</sup> People in the military cheered Bush’s campaign promises to reduce “open ended” overseas missions, which contrasted with Gore’s endorsement of President Clinton’s strategy and support for even more humanitarian missions.<sup>203</sup> As one retired Army officer observed: “One of the biggest points in Bush’s favor is that he’s not Gore.”<sup>204</sup> Similarly, a military voter who supported Bush stated, “We’ve always tried to be nonpolitical...,” but “...have become more active in the political process largely due to the Clinton administration’s policies and attitudes toward the armed forces.” He believed the military had been “grossly run down” by the Clinton administration.<sup>205</sup> Another article agreed that, despite Gore’s promise of greater defense spending, “officers planning

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<sup>201</sup> Donnelly, 2.

<sup>202</sup> Myers, 1.

<sup>203</sup> Stone, 2.

<sup>204</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>205</sup> Eckenrode, 2.

to vote Republican asserted their votes were swayed more by Bush's presumed national security team."<sup>206</sup> And, that "many in the military feel strongly that the Clinton-Gore administration has weakened America's defense. Now it might be payback time."<sup>207</sup>

## **F. SUMMARY**

Considerable evidence suggests that Marine officers' strongly supported George W. Bush during the 2000 presidential election. Five aspects of this behavior are discussed in the literature: the effect of political party affiliation on the military vote; the effect of military ethos; the effect of the Clinton presidency; the effect of peer pressure and group behavior; and officers' opinions of the presidential candidates.

First, evidence suggests that those in the military have an affinity for the Republican Party. Contrasting opinions can be found on whether military members should be considered a partisan interest group or apolitical professionals. Research so far indicates that soldiers are politically conservative, but not to an extreme. The Republican Party is attractive to officers because they share similar values and opinions. Marine officers, however, appear to believe in remaining non-partisan in their professional conduct.

Second, a cultural gap exists between the Marine Corps and civilian society. The cultural conflict may have turned Marines against the Democrats, but the gap may exist for reasons of military effectiveness, not elitism or disdain.

Third, Marine officers' beliefs concerning the importance of moral leadership coupled with their service under President Clinton, may have cast a negative impression of the Democratic Party and Al Gore.

Fourth, research on the voting behavior of social groups indicates a trend toward political homogeneity. In addition, some believe the close cohesiveness and brotherhood of military life exerts conformist political pressure on officers.

Finally, it appears that officers preferred George W. Bush over Al Gore. Primary reasons cited in favor of Bush were his party, his policies, his advisers, and his father.

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<sup>206</sup> "Military Vote in Florida Could Cement Bush Victory," [www.newsmax.com](http://www.newsmax.com), 2.

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

Primary reasons cited against Gore were his support of Clinton administration positions and his promise to remove restrictions on gays in the military.

Several questions related to these topics remain unanswered. Just how important was party affiliation to Marine officers' votes? What part did Marine Corps' core values play in their choice of candidate? How did serving under President Clinton influence Marines' voting decision? What part did social peer pressure play in their vote? And, who did Marine officers think was the better candidate, and why? The ultimate goal of this study is to determine if the majority of Marine officers did indeed favor Bush. If so, it is important to know why Marine officers voted for Bush, since the political attitudes of military personnel are discussed so often in context with the so-called civil-military gap.

### III. METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides details on how the voting behavior of Marine Corps officers was studied. A survey was used to explore the opinions of Marine officers regarding election 2000. The survey and sample population are described along with a summary of the approach for data analysis.

#### A. SURVEY

A thirty-nine question survey was used to examine the voting behavior of Marine Corps officers who were enrolled at the Naval Postgraduate School (NPS), Monterey, California in August 2001.<sup>208</sup> To prevent violation of Department of Defense directives against the “polling” of service members about their votes, the survey was strictly voluntary, and anonymity was maintained.<sup>209</sup> The following demographic information was collected from respondents as they were considered possible factors affecting voting and political behavior: gender, race, military occupational community, commissioning source, and regional origin.

The survey was designed to explore one primary question: Did Marine officers vote for Al Gore or George W. Bush? In addition, the survey sought information to answer five secondary research questions:

1. What was the effect of political party affiliation?
2. What were Marine officers opinions of the candidates?
3. What was the effect of Marine Corps’ ethos?
4. What was the effect of the Clinton administration?
5. What was the effect of peer pressure?

Many people have assumed that the majority of service members voted for Bush. As previously noted, a Defense Department directive prohibits the polling of service members regarding their vote. This is most likely intended partly to prevent the military from becoming entangled in just the kind of partisan battles that occurred in Florida after election 2000. Instead of asking about their vote, respondents were asked who did they “prefer” in the election. Responses were scaled to explore the intensity of officers’

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<sup>208</sup> The survey is presented in Appendix A.

<sup>209</sup> Department of Defense Directive 1344.10 dated 15 June 1990, prohibits the “polling” of service members regarding their vote. “Polling” being defined as requiring a response.

preference and they were also given the option of choosing “Other” if they preferred a third party candidate or none at all.

One of the main concerns regarding service members and election 2000 was political party partisanship. Questions were asked to explore the intensity of political party affiliation. In particular, questions were asked to determine party membership, participation in party activities, financial contributions, and the number of years affiliated with their party. In addition, the respondents were also asked which party platforms they preferred. Lastly, the respondents were asked whether they considered issues or party more important.

Next, respondents were asked what they thought of the candidates. Respondents were asked which candidate’s domestic, foreign, and defense policies they preferred; which candidate’s character and personality they preferred; and, because it may have been important to service members, which candidate had the better military record. Respondents were then asked to rank the various candidate factors in order of importance. For questions about candidates, respondents were limited to expressing preferences for Gore or Bush, as they were considered the most significant candidates.

To explore the effect of Marine Corps culture on officers’ votes, respondents were asked which candidate they thought better reflected Marine “core” values and would better support a “warfighting” ethos.

As discussed in Chapter II, officers’ views regarding the Clinton administration may have affected their political preferences in the 2000 election. Respondents were asked how the Clinton presidency affected military readiness and culture; how it affected the country’s economy and morals; and if the Clinton administration had influenced them to vote for Gore or Bush. Respondents were also questioned to explore anecdotal evidence that officers’ opinions of President Clinton had a negative influence on their opinions of Al Gore and, conversely, that their opinions of President Bush positively affected their opinions of his son, George W. Bush.

To capture which factor had the most influence on their vote, respondents were also asked to rank the above factors in order of importance.

Finally, to explore the possible effect of peer pressure and social group on voting behavior, the respondents were asked several questions regarding how they felt their fellow officers had voted or which candidate most officers supported. They were also asked if they had witnessed any negative reactions toward officers who deviated from the group norm.

## **B. DATA COLLECTION**

A pre-test was conducted with a number of non-participants to ensure that the survey questions were clear and easily understood. Military officers at NPS were not used for the pre-test since anonymity would not be maintained in accordance with the Defense Department directive. The survey was found to be adequate and no changes were made before implementation.

### **1. Survey Distribution**

The survey was created and distributed online using SurveySaid software provided by the NPS Office of Strategic Planning, Educational Assessment and Institutional Research (SPEAR).<sup>210</sup> The SPEAR office ensured the survey met Navy and federal requirements and then posted it to a special NPS web site. Electronic mail requesting participation in the survey was then distributed to all Marine officers at NPS through the school's Marine liaison office.

The web site remained active for two weeks. To increase the survey response rate, after one week, a second e-mail was distributed to remind officers of the cut-off date.

### **2. Response Rate**

Marine officers at NPS were notified of the survey web site on August 15, 2001. At the time of notification, there were 209 Marine Corps officer students at NPS. The SPEAR office recorded a total of 138 responses by August 29, 2001, resulting in a response rate of 66 percent. Twenty-one officers provided additional comments (10 percent of total respondents).

<sup>210</sup> Barbara Honneger, "SPEAR Helps NPS Surveys Go Online," Campus News, Naval Postgraduate School, 4 May 2001, 1. <http://www.surveysaid.com>

### 3. Respondent Demographics

As seen in Table 1, survey respondents are similar to the total population of officers in the Marine Corps with respect to racial/ethnic group and gender. Twelve percent of the respondents indicated that they were a minority, compared with 15 percent of all Marine officers; 2 percent of respondents were women, compared with 5 percent of all Marine officers. Although Marine Corps students at NPS are self-selected, this match indicates that the respondent population is fairly representative of the total USMC officer population.

**Table 1. Racial/Ethnic Group and Gender of Respondents and Officers in U.S. Marine Corps (In Percent)**

<b>Racial/Ethnic Group and Gender</b>	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>USMC Officers*</b>
<b>White</b>	88	85
<b>Black</b>	7	7
<b>Hispanic</b>	4	5
<b>Other</b>	1	3
<b>Male</b>	98	95
<b>Female</b>	2	5

\*USMC demographics compiled from Marines Magazine Almanac 2001, 46-47. Warrant Officers are excluded because they do not attend NPS.

### 4. Data Analysis

Data were collated by the SPEAR office and analyzed using the SurveySaid Analyzer program. Frequency analysis was done for each question. At the same time, cross-tabulations were conducted with several questions to examine the effects of demographics and other factors.

## **IV. RESULTS**

This chapter discusses the results of the survey of Marine Corps NPS students regarding their voting behavior and decisions during election 2000. Although the results of this study may not apply to the Marine Corps or the military officer populations as a whole, they can contribute to our understanding of this important aspect of civil-military relations.

Much of the controversy surrounding election 2000 revolved around military absentee ballots. It was assumed that the military voted overwhelmingly for Bush, only helping to confirm in the minds of some observers that the military had become a Republican “interest group.” The survey results can help to shed light on whether this assumption is true. The chapter focuses on factors that were explored in the literature review, namely officers’ opinions of the candidates, the effect of political party, the effect of Marine Corps ethos, the effect of the Clinton administration, and the effect of social group and peer pressure.

### **A. AND THE WINNER IS?**

#### **1. For Whom Did Marine Officers Vote?**

Although the results of the popular vote across the nation were very close, Marine Corps officers in the survey sample overwhelmingly preferred George W. Bush. As seen in Table 2, 84 percent preferred Bush, compared with 12 percent for Gore. Among those who preferred Bush, 61 percent claimed to have a “strong preference.”



**Table 2. Which Candidate Did Marine Corps Officers Prefer?**

<b>Question 1. Who did you prefer in the 2000 presidential election? (In Percent)</b>				
Strong Preference for Gore	Weak Preference for Gore	Preference for Other	Weak Preference for Bush	Strong Preference for Bush
8	4	4	23	61

This dramatic difference in preference is interesting considering the national vote count. As Page noted in his book, Choices and Echoes in Presidential Elections, candidates are often forced to be ambiguous about their policies to pursue election-winning middle votes.<sup>211</sup> What could account for such a large split in candidate preference?

## **2. Marine Officers' Opinions of the Candidates**

The results of survey questions related to the candidates may help to explain this dramatic split. As shown in Table 3, the majority of survey respondents had a weak or strong preference for Bush's policies on domestic, foreign, and especially defense issues. Gore's domestic policy was his most preferred area with 18 percent of officers indicating a weak or strong preference. It is interesting to note here that 89 percent of respondents favored Bush's defense policies, while only six percent favored Gore's.

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<sup>211</sup> Benjamin I. Page, Choices and Echoes in Presidential Elections: Rational Man and Electoral Democracy (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 270.

**Table 3. Preferences for the Policies of Bush and Gore (In Percent)**

<b>Survey Question</b>	<b>Weak or Strong Preference for Gore</b>	<b>Weak or Strong Preference for Bush</b>
<b>12. Which candidate's domestic policy platform did you prefer?</b>	18	76
<b>13. Which candidate's foreign policy platform did you prefer?</b>	11	82
<b>14. Which candidate's defense policy platform did you prefer?</b>	6	89

This disparity in defense policy preference is especially remarkable since Al Gore is generally regarded as having a strong military record, as a Vietnam veteran and as a pro-military senator. An officer who supported Gore had this to add on his survey: "Gore served in Vietnam, Bush did not. Bush went UA [Unauthorized Absence, Marine Corps equivalent of AWOL]. Gore did not." Another officer in the survey disliked Bush because he favored missile defense and offered less pay than Gore. Although the question was not asked, one can infer the possible effects of Gore's support of lifting the military ban on homosexuals and his support of Clinton's defense policies from an officer's comment on what determined his vote: "Open homosexuality. I will leave the military when we allow social engineering to adversely affect readiness!!" As displayed in Table 4, 34 percent of Marine officers still believed Bush had a better military record than Gore, with 23 percent. At the same time, 45 percent of Marine officers felt neither candidate had a better record. As previously noted in Chapter II, Al Gore volunteered as an enlisted soldier during the Vietnam War while George W. Bush served as an officer in the Texas Air National Guard. Al Gore's service and Congressional record should have "validated" him with active-duty members and veterans. But it never did. What happened?

**Table 4. Opinions of the Military Records of Bush and Gore (In Percent)**

<b>Question 17. Which candidate had the better military record?</b>		
Weak or Strong for Gore	Neither	Weak or Strong for Bush
23	45	32

Novak and Page assert that the candidate's character and personality are important factors for the American voter.<sup>212</sup> Again, as shown in Table 5, the majority of Marine officers preferred Bush's character and personality over those of Gore, and by a substantial margin.

**Table 5. Preference for the Character and Personality of Bush and Gore (In Percent)**

<b>Survey Question</b>	Weak or Strong Preference for Gore	Neither	Weak or Strong Preference for Bush
<b>15. Which candidate's character did you prefer?</b>	10	11	79
<b>16. Which candidate's personality did you prefer?</b>	9	15	76

The importance of character was evident in respondents' comments on the survey. For example, an officer who preferred Gore stated: "Bush was an alcoholic and did cocaine. He also has no clue on foreign policy." An officer who preferred Bush, however, felt "Gore seems to be a politician. Bush is a leader. The debates proved it to me." While another officer commented that Gore had an "appalling" moral and ethical base.

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<sup>212</sup> Novak, 7. Page, 233.

Anecdotal evidence suggested that Gore’s loyalty to President Clinton had negatively influenced military officers’ opinions of him and that officers’ opinions of Bush had been positively influenced by his father. As shown in Table 6, 72 percent of respondents believed their opinion of Gore was negatively influenced by President Clinton. This agrees with an officer’s comment on the survey that Gore had great domestic policies and adequate foreign policies but was overshadowed by his involvement with Clinton. At the same time, 59 percent of respondents felt their opinion of George W. Bush was positively influenced by their experiences under his father’s administration. This supports the notion that military officers still admire President Bush for his leadership during the Gulf War.

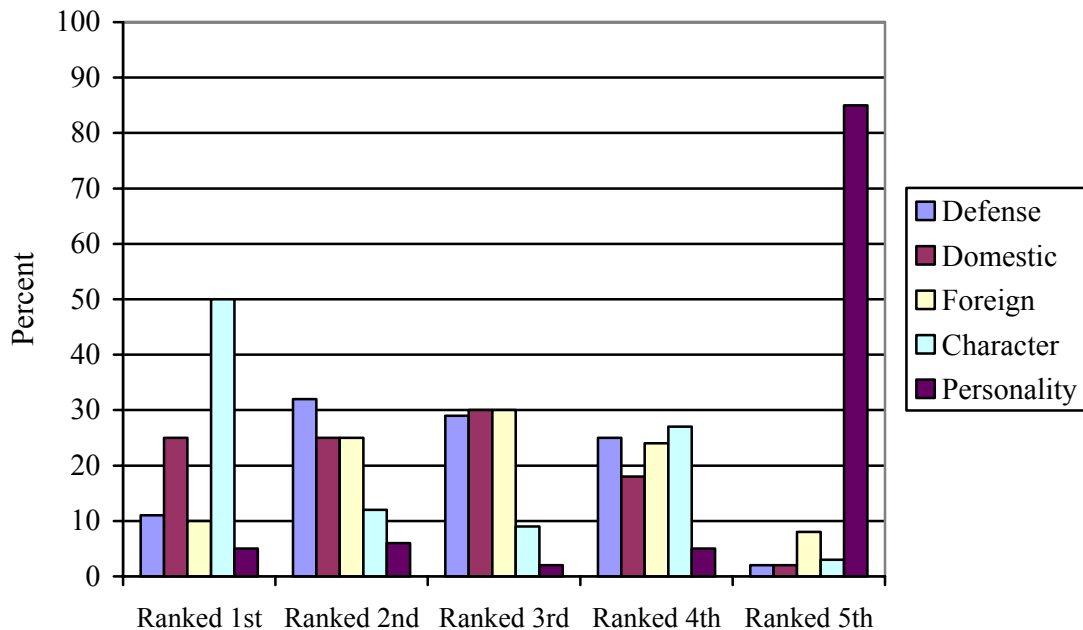
**Table 6. President Clinton’s and Bush’s Influence on Officers’ Opinions  
(In Percent)**

<b>Survey Question</b>	<b>Strongly or Somewhat Negatively</b>	<b>No influence</b>	<b>Strongly or Somewhat Positively</b>
<b>26. Was your opinion of Al Gore positively or negatively influenced by your experience under President Clinton?</b>	72	22	6
<b>27. Was your opinion of George W. Bush positively or negatively influenced by your experience under President Bush?</b>	2	39	59

Another officer’s comment supports the idea that Bush’s advisers were a factor: “Reputation of G. W. Bush ticket affiliates (Cheney and Powell) was strong influence in favor of voting for him.”

Figure 1 shows how officers responded when asked to rank the importance of five factors. As seen here, respondents tended to believe character was the strongest single influence in their decision, with 50 percent of respondents ranking it first. As one officer commented: “Character is what counted most in this election after having a President

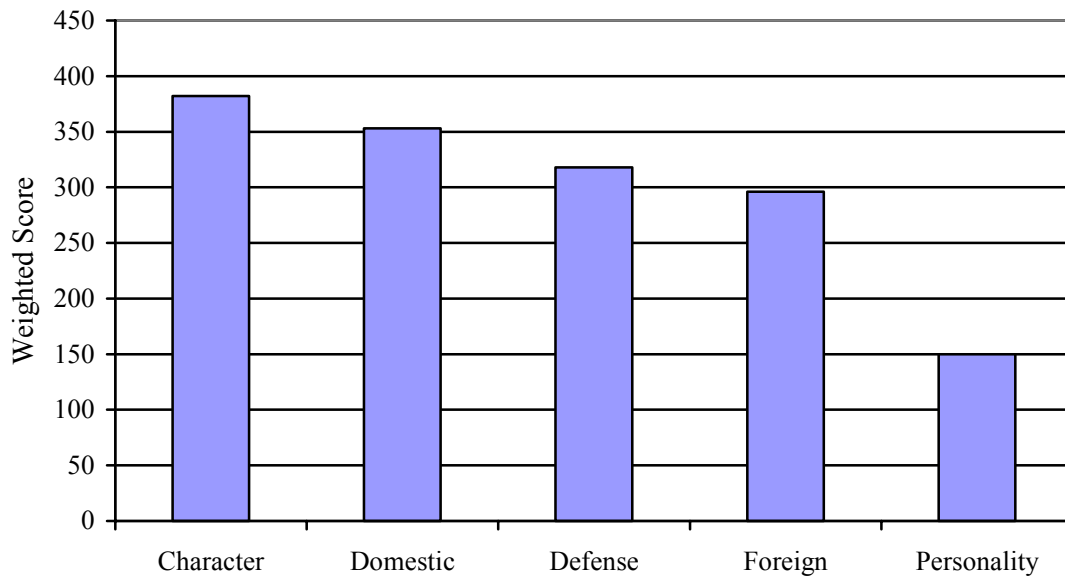
with very little character and morals.” Marine officers tended to rank defense policy second, followed by foreign policy, domestic policy, and personality.



**Figure 1. Ranking Importance of Candidate Factors**

Assigning a weighted score to respondent’s answers for each factor, however, produces slightly different results.<sup>213</sup> As seen in Figure 2, character was still the strongest influence in their decision. Domestic policy becomes second most important with defense policy third. The importance of domestic policy issues to supporters of either candidate is evident in respondents’ comments. Marine officers who supported Gore cited issues such as Social Security, Affirmative Action, and the environment. Marine officers who supported Bush cited issues such as welfare, economic policies, and abortion. In any case, character still remains preeminent in importance for why Marine officers chose a particular candidate.

<sup>213</sup> Weighted scores were determined by multiplying the number of respondents who ranked each factor by different constants depending on the ranking it received. The factors that were ranked first were multiplied by five; factors ranked second were multiplied by four; factors ranked third were multiplied by three; factors ranked fourth were multiplied by two; and factors ranked fifth were multiplied by one. Figures for each factor were summed to provide a final weighted score, which indicated how respondents ranked the factors overall.



**Figure 2. Ranking Importance of Candidate Factors (Weighted Score)**

It is interesting to note that a small minority expressed their preference for neither Gore nor Bush. Three officers commented that they voted for a third party candidate. Four officers said that they preferred John McCain, but voted for Bush as the next best alternative. Two officers who preferred Bush believed their choice was the “lesser of two evils.” Evidence of non-partisan behavior or voter apathy was reflected by one officer’s comment: “I did not vote. And don’t vote.”

## **B. WHAT WAS THE EFFECT OF POLITICAL PARTY?**

As previously observed, some writers have claimed that the military has become a Republican “interest group.” While the survey confirmed that respondents preferred Bush, it also shed some light on why Marine officers may identify with the Republican Party.

### **1. Party Registration**

As seen in Table 7, when Marine officers were asked if they were currently registered with a political party, 54 percent, claimed to be registered as a Republican.

Only 8 percent said they were registered as a Democrat. Thirty-eight percent of the respondents, however, claimed to have no preference or were not registered with any political party. It is worth noting, however, that since 84 percent of respondents preferred Bush (Table 2), a sizable proportion of non-aligned officers still ended up supporting Bush.

**Table 7. Political Party Registration of Marine Corps Officers (In Percent)**

<b>Question 2. Are you currently registered with a political party? If so, which party?</b>		
Democrat	Republican	No preference/not registered
8	54	38

Although the number of minority respondents was small, it is interesting to note that, of the 8 percent of officers claiming to be registered as a Democrat, 45 percent were black. In addition, 55 percent of black officers claimed to be a registered Democrat, while none claimed to be registered as a Republican. Hispanics, on the other hand, tended to be Republican, with 60 percent of Hispanic respondents claiming to be registered as a Republican and none claiming to be registered as a Democrat. These were the only easily discernible demographic trends throughout the results.

## **2. Intensity of Political Party Involvement**

Table 8 summarizes the responses to questions used to explore the extent of officers' preference for a political party. Officers were first asked whether they had ever contributed their time or money to a political party. Over eight out of ten Marine officers answered "no" to this question. When asked if they contributed money prior to election 2000, 91 percent answered "no." And, when asked whether they had attended any political party functions before election 2000, 96 percent answered "no." These results lend credence to the view that Marine Corps officers are more inclined to be political spectators than political actors.

**Table 8. Participation by Marine Corps Officers in Political Parties  
(In Percent)**

<b>Survey Question</b>	<b>Democrat</b>	<b>Republican</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>No</b>
<b>3. Have you ever contributed your time or money to a political party? If so, which party?</b>	2	15	1	82
<b>5. Did you make a financial contribution to a political party before the last Presidential election?</b>	1	7	1	91
<b>6. Did you attend any political party functions before the last election?</b>	0	4	0	96

### **3. When Did Officers Choose Their Party?**

One explanation as to why the majority of Marine officers tend to support the Republican Party and its candidates is that persons with more conservative values may be inclined to join the Marine Corps. To explore this premise, respondents were asked how long they had been affiliated with their political party of choice. The vast majority of Marine Corps officers at NPS are captains or majors. This means that, most of the respondents were commissioned either during President Bush's term (before 1993) or during President Clinton's first term (between 1993 and 1996). Table 9 displays the percentages of when the Marine officers said they developed Republican tendencies. Of those officers claiming to be registered as a Republican, 84 percent said they had determined their preference before 1992. At that time, most of the respondents were newly commissioned or still in college, suggesting that the majority of respondents were Republican before they even joined the Marine Corps. Table 9 also shows that over nine out of ten officers who were registered Democrats formed their political affiliation before 1992. The results in Table 9 generally suggest, then, that the respondents formed their political affiliations before joining the Marine Corps.



**Table 9. Duration of Political Party Affiliation for Marine Corps Officers  
(In Percent)**

<b>Question 4. How long have you been affiliated with your current political party of choice?</b>	<b>Officers Registered as Republicans</b>	<b>Officers Registered as Democrats</b>
<b>Since before 1992</b>	84	91
<b>Since 1993-1996</b>	8	9
<b>Since 1994-2000</b>	8	0

#### **4. What Do Officers Like About Their Party?**

As noted by Page, it is difficult at times to distinguish between certain Democrats and Republicans because political candidates of both parties often seek vote-winning middle platforms. Enduring differences, however, do exist between the two parties.<sup>214</sup> Marine officers were asked to indicate which party they preferred based on the party's domestic, foreign, and defense platforms. Table 10 summarizes the results. As expected, the vast majority of respondents preferred the Republican Party in every instance. Eighty-three percent of Marine officers supported the Republican Party because of its foreign policy platform and 90 percent supported the Republican platform on defense policy. Over 60 percent strongly preferred the Republican platform for both. Support was weaker for the Republican domestic policy platform, with only 43 percent strongly favoring Republican policies and 27 percent weakly favoring Republican policies. Since only 54 percent claimed Republican registration, a significant number of non-aligned officers still seem to favor Republican party because of its established platform on major policy issues. Since it cannot be determined here whether the respondents are *familiar* with the official platforms of the two parties, a more accurate statement is that the vast majority of Marine officers identify with what they *perceive* to be the Republican party positions on major issues.

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<sup>214</sup> Page, 63.

**Table 10. Party Platform Preferences of Marine Corps Officers (In Percent)**

<b>Survey Question</b>	<b>Weak or Strong for Democrat</b>	<b>Prefer Neither</b>	<b>Weak or Strong for Republican</b>
<b>7. Which party do you prefer because of its domestic policy platform?</b>	14	16	70
<b>8. Which party do you prefer because of its foreign policy platform?</b>	8	9	83
<b>9. Which party do you prefer because of its defense policy platform?</b>	4	6	90

The small number of officers that preferred the Democratic platforms explained their preference in open comments. A respondent who preferred the Democratic Party commented that Democrats had superior “environmental policies and separation of church and state ideals.” Another commented: “I am an advocate of Social Security/Affirmative Action. Thus, the Republican party tends not to support either.”

On the other hand, a respondent who preferred the Republican Party based his choice on “economic policy, [its] stand on abortion and welfare-related issues, and foreign policy.” Another respondent attributed the improved economy of the late 1990s to a Republican congress. And yet another officer believed that, “On nearly every single issue, the Democratic party caters to the lazy and is pushing us toward a socialist state.”

Evidence of non-partisanship could be found in one respondent’s comment: “I do not dwell on party affiliations. I consider myself conservative.” And yet another considered himself an “...independent Educated Voter...”

Regardless of which party they supported, it appears that respondents thought about the issues and chose their respective political parties for reasons that were important to them.

## 5. Party or Candidate?

As cited earlier, Dowd believed military officers voted for the “man” rather than the party. As shown in Table 11, when asked about the importance of a candidate’s party versus a candidate’s stance on issues, 76 percent of Marine officers felt that issues were more important than party. Thirteen percent felt they were equally important, and 11 percent felt that a candidate’s party was more important. The majority of the 11 percent that felt party was more important said they were registered as a Republican. While it appears most officers do select candidates based on issues, Page asserts that selection of a candidate based solely on political party is not necessarily irrational. Page claims that party voting is an effective and sensible substitute for issue-voting, because a person can be reasonably confident that a Democratic or Republican candidate stands closer to their opinions if the voter is a Democrat or Republican. Using party identification saves voters a lot of time, since most people have better things to do than follow everything a candidate says or does.<sup>215</sup>

**Table 11. Importance of Candidate’s Party Versus Candidate’s Issues**

<b>Question 11. Which would you say is more important in your voting choice, the candidate’s political party or the candidate’s stance on specific issues?</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Party is somewhat or very important</b>	11
<b>Both about equal</b>	13
<b>Issues are somewhat or very important</b>	76

## C. WHAT WAS THE EFFECT OF ETHOS?

Literary evidence has established the importance of culture and ethos to Marine officers. The foundation of Marine Corps culture is its core values of honor, courage, and commitment. Respondents were asked which candidate better exemplified these values. They were also asked which candidate they thought would best support a “warfighting” ethos. The results are displayed in Table 12. As seen here, 75 percent of officers

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<sup>215</sup> Page, 104.

believed Bush best exemplified the core values of the Marine Corps. Despite the previously-cited officer's comment about Bush's moral deficiencies, the majority of officers still felt that Bush best exemplified honor, courage, and commitment. An even greater majority, 85 percent, believed Bush would better support a "warfighting" ethos. As mentioned in the literature review, Marine officers believed the issues of homosexuals in the service and women in combat were harmful to warfighting effectiveness.<sup>216</sup> Gore was perceived as being an advocate for both.<sup>217</sup> This may help to explain the resulting preference for Bush.

**Table 12. Candidates and Marine Corps Ethos (In Percent)**

<b>Survey Question</b>	<b>Weak or Strong for Gore</b>	<b>Both Equal</b>	<b>Weak or Strong for Bush</b>
<b>19. Which candidate best exemplified Marine Corps' core values?</b>	7	18	75
<b>20. Which candidate did you think would best support a "warfighting" ethos?</b>	4	10	85

#### **D. WHAT WAS THE EFFECT OF PRESIDENT CLINTON?**

##### **1. President Clinton and the Military**

As discussed in Chapter II, President Clinton and the military were often at odds. Officers were especially concerned about the state of the military during Clinton's administration and Clinton's leadership. Table 13 summarizes respondents' answers concerning President Clinton's effect on the military. As seen in Table 13, 86 percent of officers surveyed believed the military became physically weaker during Clinton's presidency. At the same time, 81 percent of respondents believed that the military's culture was weakened during the Clinton administration. In the words of one officer,

<sup>216</sup> "Regarding Women in Combat," 29-30.

<sup>217</sup> Myers, 3.

regarding the military's culture, "former President Clinton hastened the moral decay of the U.S. military."

**Table 13. President Clinton's Effect on the Military (In Percent)**

<b>Survey Question</b>	<b>Somewhat or Much Weaker</b>	<b>No Change</b>	<b>Somewhat or Much Stronger</b>
<b>21. Did the military get physically stronger or weaker under President Clinton? (readiness/equipment/weapons systems)</b>	86	6	8
<b>22. Did the military's culture get stronger or weaker under President Clinton? (warfighting ethos/esprit de corps/discipline)</b>	81	15	4

## **2. President Clinton and the Country**

Respondents were asked how the state of the nation changed during President Clinton's terms. When asked if the country got economically stronger or weaker under President Clinton, 90 percent believed the country's economy got stronger. Since it is generally accepted that the nation's economy was strong during his administration, this question served to test respondents for obvious bias against President Clinton. Several officers commented, however, that they believed the Republican congress or other factors, not Clinton's leadership, were responsible for the strong economy.

To examine the effect of the Lewinsky scandal, respondents were asked how they felt about the American people's moral standards during President Clinton's terms. Seventy-nine percent of officers surveyed felt that the American people's moral standards declined under President Clinton. This agrees with assertions that military officers, unlike the majority of Americans, were unable to forgive President Clinton's behavior.

As summarized in Table 14, respondents overall believed the country prospered under President Clinton but also accepted lower moral standards.

**Table 14. President Clinton's Effect on the U.S. (In Percent)**

<b>Survey Question</b>	<b>Somewhat or Much Weaker /Lower</b>	<b>No Change</b>	<b>Somewhat or Much Stronger /Higher</b>
<b>23. Did the country get economically stronger or weaker under President Clinton?</b>	6	4	90
<b>24. Did the American people's moral standards get higher or lower during President Clinton's terms?</b>	79	16	3

### **3. President Clinton's Effect on Officers' Votes**

The Marine officers who responded to the survey served during the Clinton administration. Table 15 shows how respondents' votes may have been influenced by their service under President Clinton. Seventy-four percent of respondents felt their experiences under President Clinton influenced them to vote for Bush. It is interesting to note that, out of those officers that claimed no party preference or registration, 77 percent said they were influenced by President Clinton to vote for Bush. The results in Table 15 suggest that President Clinton's performance had a significant effect on the voting decisions of Marine officers. This agrees with Page's assertion that, while voters may not know what candidates stand for or what their policies mean, they do know what they value and may punish the incumbent or the incumbent's party for past performance.<sup>218</sup>

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<sup>218</sup> Page, 221.

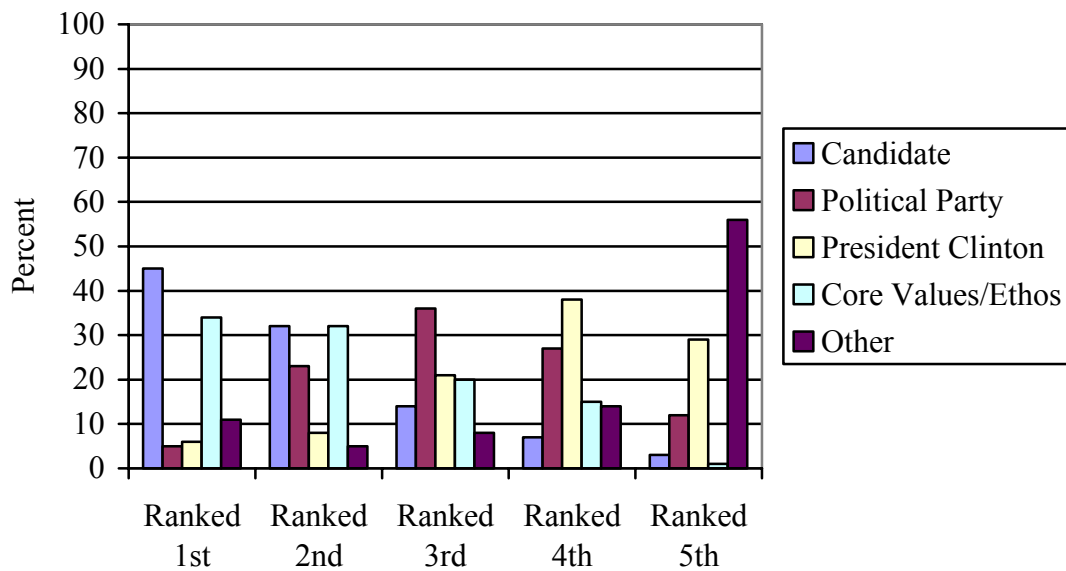
**Table 15. President Clinton's Effect on Voting**

<b>Question 25. How did your experiences during the Clinton administration influence your vote?</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Strong or Weak influence to vote for Gore</b>	8
<b>No influence</b>	18
<b>Strong or Weak influence to vote for Bush</b>	74

Respondents' comments agree with this observation. For example, one officer stated that he was influenced by "two deployments under Clinton enforcing an unclear foreign policy toward Iraq." Another officer believed "the presidency is the last bastion of integrity. President Clinton tarnished it severely, and got away with it."

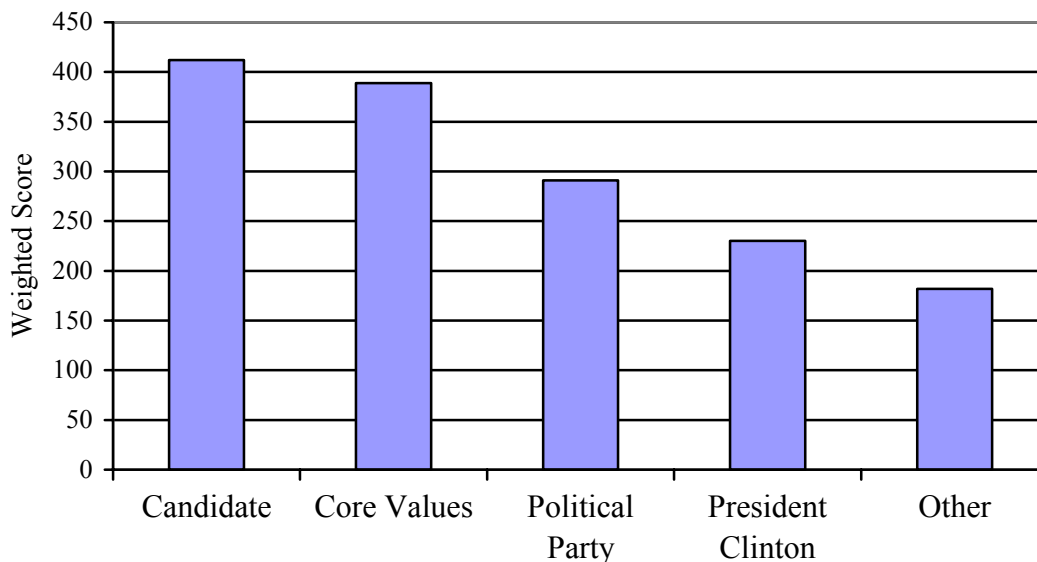
**E. WHAT MATTERED MOST?**

Respondents were asked to rank various factors as being most important in their voting decision. As seen in Figure 3, 45 percent of officers ranked Candidate first. Close behind was Core Values or Ethos, with 34 percent of officers saying it was most important. Somewhat surprisingly, Political Party received a relatively high ranking as a moderate influence, with 36 percent of officers selecting it as third most important. Service under President Clinton tended to be ranked fourth by the most respondents. These results indicate the importance of the individual candidate and officers' values over other factors.



**Figure 3. Ranking Importance of Voting Factors**

As seen in Figure 4, assigning weighted scores to respondents' answers results in the same ranking.<sup>219</sup> Candidate and Core Values come out as the two most important influences overall in the voting decision of Marine officers.



**Figure 4. Ranking Importance of Voting Factors (Weighted Score)**

<sup>219</sup> Weighted scores determined using same method used with Candidate factors. See note 213.



## **F. WHAT WAS THE EFFECT OF PEER PRESSURE?**

### **1. Effect of Social Group**

Regardless of personal political beliefs, as displayed in Table 16, the vast majority of Marine officers felt that most of their peers voted for and supported Bush. Ninety-four percent of respondents thought most officers voted for Bush and 93 percent of respondents felt that most officers supported Bush. The source of these beliefs is uncertain, but the results confirm that Marine officers perceive their social group as having had a very strong preference for George W. Bush. Indeed, no respondent felt that “other Marine officers” voted for Gore or that “most Marine officers” would have supported Gore. The few officers who did not select Bush as the candidate of choice for Marine officers indicated “no idea.”

**Table 16. How Marine Officers Think Their Peers Voted (In Percent)**

<b>Survey Question</b>	<b>Believe Gore</b>	<b>No Idea</b>	<b>Evenly Divided/ Other</b>	<b>Believe Bush</b>
<b>29. How do you think other Marine officers voted?</b>	0	5	1	94
<b>30. Which candidate do you feel was supported by most Marine officers?</b>	0	6	1	93

Another social group to consider is the respondent’s family.<sup>220</sup> Of those officers who claimed Democratic registration, 64 percent stated that their family was primarily Democrat. Of those who claimed Republican registration, 59 percent answered that their family was primarily Republican. Out of all respondents, 50 percent claimed to come from a Republican family, while 23 percent claimed to come from a Democratic family.

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<sup>220</sup> Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet, 140.

Therefore, many respondents may be predisposed toward a certain political party before ever joining the Marine Corps.

## **2. How Officers Were Influenced by Their Peers**

Generally, respondents do not admit to being influenced by their peers' political beliefs. As seen in Table 17, 69 percent of Marine officers felt their fellow Marines had no influence. At the same time, 31 percent of officers surveyed did say that their peers had some influence, but only one percent felt that their peers exerted "a great deal" of influence. No trends were evident by party registration; that is, officers claiming to be registered Democrats answered in about the same frequency as did officers claiming to be registered Republicans.

**Table 17. The Influence of Peers (In Percent)**

<b>Survey Question</b>	<b>Not at all</b>	<b>Some</b>	<b>A great deal</b>
<b>31. Do you think you were influenced at all by the discussions, opinions, and comments of your fellow Marines?</b>	69	30	1

## **3. Should Officers Support a Candidate?**

Table 18 shows that 55 percent of Marine officers did not feel it was important for their peers to support a candidate. This could be an indication that respondents were not concerned with how, or if, their fellow Marines voted. At the same time, 27 percent of respondents felt that it was very important for officers to support one candidate or another. These officers might be in agreement with Marines cited in the literature review, who believe the responsibilities of citizenship make it important for Marines to participate in the electoral process.

**Table 18. Importance of Supporting Candidates (In Percent)**

<b>Survey Question</b>	<b>Not Important</b>	<b>Somewhat important</b>	<b>Very important</b>
<b>32. Did you feel it was important for Marine officers to support one candidate or another?</b>	55	18	27

#### **4. Deviants from the Group Norm**

Almost half (48 percent) of Marine officers indicated that they had never seen officers with politically deviant opinions viewed in a negative manner. Almost the same proportion, 43 percent, however, felt that they had sometimes seen a negative reaction toward an officer with a political opinion not supported by most of his or her peers. Almost one in ten Marine officers believed they had seen negative reactions often. Basically, this suggests the presence of some pressure on officers who were deviants from the group norm. When examining the results from the perspective of those with less popular political views, officers claiming to be registered Democrats, the percentages are divided more evenly. As seen in Table 19, 73 percent of officers who claimed to be registered Democrat had seen negative reactions sometimes or often. It is difficult to draw conclusions from this result, because the number of officers who claimed to be registered Democrat was small. It is also likely that these Democrats were the targets of the negative opinions or reaction, since their views were clearly in the minority.

**Table 19. Negative Reactions to Political Deviation**

<b>Question 33. Have you ever seen or heard a negative opinion or reaction toward a Marine who may have openly expressed support for a candidate or platform not supported by most of your peers?</b>	<b>All Respondents (Percent)</b>	<b>Democratic Respondents (Percent)</b>
<b>Never</b>	48	27
<b>Sometimes</b>	43	46
<b>Often</b>	9	27

## **G. SUMMARY**

This chapter examines the results of the survey, looking at the effects on voting of five variables: the candidates; the political party; the Marine Corps ethos; President Clinton; and peer pressure.

Marine Corps officers preferred George W. Bush by a large majority. This agrees with the perception that military members voted primarily for Bush. The majority of officers favored Bush's stance on issues and preferred his character and personality. As anecdotal evidence indicated, President Clinton influenced the majority of officers to vote against Al Gore, while positive experiences with President Bush had some influence on a majority of officers to favor his son, George W. Bush. Results indicate that respondents felt the candidate's character was of primary importance to their voting choice.

As seen in Chapter II, the prevailing view is that military officers are Republican partisans. Over half of Marine officers surveyed did claim to be registered Republican. The vast majority of respondents, however, did not participate in the activities of their political party. In addition, the results indicate that most Marine officers decided on their political affiliation before joining the service, suggesting that self-selection is the likely cause of the current imbalance in political representation within the Marine Corps. The majority of respondents favored the Republican Party for all of its stated platforms, but especially for its stance on defense issues. Results indicate that respondents considered the candidate's position on issues more important than the candidate's political party.

For the Marine officers surveyed, most felt Bush better exemplified their values than did Gore. The majority of respondents also felt Bush would better support a "warfighting" ethos.

The Marine officers held a very negative view of President Clinton. In fact, most officers surveyed felt that President Clinton hurt the military and the country. As it turned out, officers' views of President Clinton influenced a considerable proportion of officers to vote for Bush.

When comparing the effects of the above factors, the majority of respondents felt that the individual candidate or Marine Corps values were the most important factors in

their voting choice. According to the Marine officers, the candidate's political party and President Clinton were less important.

Almost every officer believed his or her peers supported and voted for Bush, but most claimed that they were not influenced by the discussions, opinions, or comments of other Marines. Most respondents did not think it was important for Marines to support a candidate. At the same time, over half had seen or heard Marines react negatively to people having different political beliefs.

Overall, results confirmed perceptions that Marine officers are predominantly Republican and strongly favored Bush in the election. Respondents do not appear, however, to be politically active beyond voting, and their voting choice is based on a variety of factors.

## **V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This study examines the voting behavior of Marine officers during the presidential election of 2000. A 39-question survey was distributed to Marine Corps officers who were attending the Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, in August of 2001. The primary research question sought to determine which candidate Marine officers preferred and why. Secondary questions related to the effects of political party, Marine Corps values, President Clinton, and peer pressure on the voting behavior of Marine officers.

### **A. SUMMARY**

The main findings that emerged from this study are as follows: 1) The vast majority of Marine officers favored George W. Bush; 2) Although more than half of Marine officers claimed to be registered Republicans, very few were active in party activities and the Republican party was not a primary factor in their voting choice; 3) Most Marine officers felt that George W. Bush was more closely aligned with the values and ethos of the Marine Corps than was Al Gore; 4) President Clinton left a negative impression with the majority of Marine officers and this impression influenced them to vote against Al Gore; 5) The most influential factors for Marine officers were the individual candidate and his core values, not the political party; 6) Most Marine officers perceived their peers as supporting and voting for George W. Bush, but they did not generally feel that their fellow Marines had significant influence over their voting choice.

More specifically, 84 percent of respondents preferred George W. Bush, while only 12 percent of respondents favored Al Gore. Marine officers overwhelmingly favored Bush's platform for domestic, foreign, and defense policies. At the same time, over 70 percent of respondents preferred Bush's character and personality. Although Marine officers were less favorable toward Bush's military record, 75 percent felt he better exemplified Marine values, and 85 percent felt that he would better support a "warfighting" ethos.

A majority of respondents, 54 percent, claimed to have registered as a Republican, while only 8 percent claimed to be registered Democrat. Over one-third of

Marine officers claimed no preference or were not registered with a political party. Although Marine officers clearly favored Republican policies, over 80 percent had never donated time or money to a political party, and over 90 percent did not participate in party activities prior to election 2000. Seventy-six percent of respondents believed that the candidate's stance on major issues was more important than the candidate's political party. Finally, 84 percent of Marine officers who claimed to be registered with a political party had probably formed their political preference before joining the Marine Corps, suggesting that the apparent ideological imbalance among Marine officers is more a result of self-selection than political indoctrination or socialization.

In the eyes of most respondents, President Clinton's legacy to the military was a negative one. Over 80 percent of Marine officers surveyed felt the military had become weaker both physically and culturally under President Clinton. The split in moral values between Marine officers and civilians was displayed by the results that, although most officers agree the country prospered during President Clinton's two terms, 79 percent of Marine officers surveyed felt that America's moral standards had declined under his leadership. Even though the majority of respondents may have voted for Bush regardless of Clinton's terms, 74 percent of respondents claimed that their experiences during the Clinton years influenced them to vote for Bush.

The perception of over 90 percent of respondents was that the majority of Marine officers supported and voted for Bush. Although this indicates a perception of group ideology, 99 percent of respondents did not feel that their peers exercised "a great deal" of influence over their political opinions. This does not mean, however, that pressure to conform to the group norm were absent: over half of Marine officers reported that they had witnessed negative reactions toward those who did not support the Republican (most popular) line. Finally, a majority of respondents, 55 percent, did not feel it was important for their fellow Marines to support a candidate at all.

Overall, respondents felt that the candidate was the most important factor in their voting decision. The next most important factor was the values of the Marine Corps. Political party and other factors were reported as less important.

## **B. CONCLUSIONS**

The results of this study only reflect the opinions of Marine officers attending the Naval Postgraduate School during August 2001 and may not apply to all Marine officers or Marines as a whole. They may serve however, to improve knowledge of how Marines tend to think and what they tend to value, and thereby increase our understanding of civil-military relations in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Although the data confirm perceptions that the majority of Marine officers are Republican and favored Bush in the election, the results also suggest that Marine officers' voting behavior is not caused by party partisanship alone. Respondents do not appear to be politically active beyond voting, and their voting choice is motivated by more than just party identification.

One can conclude, then, that Marine officers' voting behavior is not just the result of being a partisan interest group but also tends to be a manifestation of their warrior values and attitudes. Rather than a decline in professionalism, their voting behavior reflects their strong devotion to the profession of arms. The Marine Corps is a tight-knit, cohesive, social group with high esprit de corps and a strong culture. A culture, that may be different, but not without purpose. Perhaps society should not be alarmed or surprised that Marines share similar beliefs and attitudes. As supported by this study, the Marine Corps, for a variety of reasons, is a remarkably homogeneous organization with regards to political ideology. Despite the imbalanced representation of the nation's political spectrum, it is the very strength of the Marine Corps culture and values that ensure the organization continues as loyal servants of the American people. The Marine Corps values of honor, courage, and commitment support the rule of law and the basic principles of our Constitution and government, thereby preventing the Praetorianism exhibited by less professional military forces.

Evidence indicates Marines behave like most voters. They vote for people they believe will look out for their interests. They vote based on what is important to them. They vote for people they admire and respect. What is important for the American people to realize is that there is nothing unusual about what they believe in or why they tend to vote one way or the other. Marines are professional warriors who fight for the



American people wherever and whenever called. They are not a dangerous fringe group that desires control of the government or the American people it serves. While some Marine officers criticize candidates or political parties, none of the respondents advocates or suggests that all Marines should support the same political party. As General Charles Krulak writes, any identification of Marine officers with a particular political party or as a political interest group “assumes Marine officers are ‘lemmings’ vice rationale professionals.”<sup>221</sup>

The consistent thread through all these arguments is the influence of Marines’ values and their belief in the Marine Corps’ role as a fighting force. Their political alignment, their culture, their opinions of leaders, are all driven by their strong belief in the ethos and values of the Marine Corps. When we examine how they voted and why, we find what we are studying is a conflict of values. The values of some, who claim the Marines are extremists and disconnected from society versus the values of the Marine Corps, who claim their culture and beliefs make them the professional fighting force needed by America. General Charles Krulak had this to say recently about the Marines’ struggle to maintain its values:

The epic film, ‘Gladiator,’ has been a great success in our Country partly because it resuscitates the age-old ideal of the noble warrior, the individual who puts honor, integrity and accountability above all else, and in so doing, creates and sustains an ethos of selflessness and sacrifice...Today, our military desperately wants to manifest these attributes but external forces as well as internal faults largely prevent it from being able to do so...beyond a new Defense Strategy, new weapons systems, a national missile defense, pay raises etc. lies the military’s true need: a restoration of the culture of nobility that is at the core of our military.<sup>222</sup>

### **C. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The political spectrum of Marine officers appears to be imbalanced. The organization is dissimilar politically and ideologically from the nation as a whole. Whether this is a cause for concern requires further study. At this time, it does not appear to affect the Marine Corps’ ability to serve our nation as professional warriors. Since

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<sup>221</sup> General Charles C. Krulak USMC (ret) e-mail.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

much of the imbalance is apparently the result of self-selection, the recent terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 may witness a new generation of more politically diverse men and women becoming Marine officers as more Americans of all political beliefs may seek to serve.

If the American people determine that the military should be politically balanced, then further research should be focused on determining why Americans who prefer the Democratic party do not join the military in the same numbers as those who prefer the Republican party and why Americans support the values or positions of the two parties. In light of the continued need for new volunteers, especially in time of war, the military may not be tapping a large source of manpower.

The civil-military tensions that accompanied election 2000 will probably fade with a Republican administration and the current focus on fighting a war against terrorism. The Marine Corps, and the military as a whole, should continue to emphasize professionalism and enforce regulations concerning political activities.

In the end, the American people determine what kind of Marine Corps and what kind of Marines serve our country. The people set the standards by which Marines exist. As Lieutenant General Krulak writes:

We exist today—we flourish today—not because of what we know we are, or what we know we can do, but because of what the grassroots of our country believes we are and believes we can do...The American people believe that Marines are downright good for the country; that the Marines are masters of a form of unfailing alchemy which converts unoriented youths into proud, self-reliant, stable citizens—citizens into whose hands the nation's affairs may safely be entrusted...And, likewise, should the people ever lose that conviction—as a result of our failure to meet their high, almost spiritual standards, the Marine Corps will quickly disappear.<sup>223</sup>

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<sup>223</sup> Victor H. Krulak, XV.

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## **APPENDIX A. MARINE CORPS OFFICER SURVEY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Thank you for taking this survey. I am conducting this survey to explore the political attitudes and voting behavior of Marine Corps Naval Postgraduate students in the recent presidential election. As you may know, the military vote garnered some attention recently, but there is not much data on which candidate people in the military actually voted for or why they chose particular candidates. I hope to find some answers with this survey. There are 39 questions that will take approximately ten minutes to answer. The results will be compiled so that percentages and averages can be reported in my thesis. Personal information will be strictly confidential and all officers' comments and answers will remain anonymous. I will, however, share the final statistical results with interested officers. Note – THIS SURVEY IS FOR MARINE CORPS NAVAL POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS ONLY AND IS STRICTLY VOLUNTARY!

### **WHO DID THEY VOTE FOR?**

1. Who did you prefer in the 2000 presidential election?

Strong for Gore

Weak for Gore

Other

Weak for Bush

Strong for Bush

### **EFFECT OF PARTY?**

2. Are you currently registered with a political party? If so, which party?

Democrat

Republican

Other

No preference/not registered

3. Have you ever contributed your time or money to a political party? If so, which party?

Democrat

Republican

Other

None

4. How long have you been affiliated with your current political party of choice?

Since before 1992

Since 1993-1996

Since 1996-2000

Never joined a party or preferred one

5. Did you make a financial contribution to a political party before the last Presidential election?

No

Democratic Party

Republican Party

Other

6. Did you attend any political party functions before the last election?

No

Democratic

Republican

Other

7. Which party do you prefer because of its domestic policy platform?

Strong Democratic

Weak Democratic

Neither

Weak Republican

Strong Republican

8. Which party do you prefer because of its foreign policy platform?

Strong Democratic

Weak Democratic

Neither

Weak Republican

Strong Republican

9. Which party do you prefer because of its defense policy platform?

Strong Democratic

Weak Democratic

Neither

Weak Republican

Strong Republican

10. Does your family (father, mother, siblings) tend to primarily support one party over the other? If so, which party?

Democrat

Republican

Other

None

11. Which would you say is more important in your voting choice, the candidate's political party or the candidate's stance on specific issues?

Party is very important

Party is somewhat important

Both about equal

Issues are somewhat important

Issues are very important

### **OPINIONS OF CANDIDATES?**

12. Which candidate's domestic platform did you prefer? (abortion/gun control/social security)

Strong Gore

Weak Gore

Neither

Weak Bush

Strong Bush

13. Which candidate's foreign policy platform did you prefer? (peacekeeping/international trade)

Strong Gore

Weak Gore

Neither

Weak Bush

Strong Bush

14. Which candidate's defense policy platform did you prefer? (weapons/missions/quality of life)

Strong Gore

Weak Gore

Neither

Weak Bush

Strong Bush

15. Which candidate's character did you prefer?

Strong Gore

Weak Gore

Neither

Weak Bush

Strong Bush

16. Which candidate's personality did you prefer?

Strong Gore  
Weak Gore  
Neither  
Weak Bush  
Strong Bush

17. Which candidate had the better military record?

Strong Gore  
Weak Gore  
Neither  
Weak Bush  
Strong Bush

18. Rank in order of importance to you the following:

Candidate's defense policy  
Candidate's domestic policy  
Candidate's foreign policy  
Candidate's Character  
Candidate's Personality

### **EFFECT OF ETHOS?**

19. Which candidate best exemplified Marine Corps' core values?

Strong Gore  
Weak Gore  
Both about equal  
Weak Bush  
Strong Bush

20. Which candidate did you think would best support a "warfighting" ethos?

Strong Gore  
Weak Gore  
Both about equal  
Weak Bush  
Strong Bush

### **EFFECT OF CLINTON?**

21. Did the military get physically stronger or weaker under President Clinton?  
(readiness/equipment/weapons systems)

Much weaker  
Somewhat weaker  
No change  
Somewhat stronger  
Much stronger

22. Did the military's culture get stronger or weaker under President Clinton?  
(warfighting ethos/esprit de corps/discipline)

Much weaker

Somewhat weaker

No change

Somewhat stronger

Much stronger

23. Did the country get economically stronger or weaker under President Clinton?

Much weaker

Somewhat weaker

No change

Somewhat stronger

Much stronger

24. Did the American people's moral standards get higher or lower during President Clinton's terms?

Much lower

Somewhat lower

No change

Somewhat higher

Much higher

25. How did your experiences during the Clinton administration influence your vote?

Strong influence to vote for Gore

Weak influence to vote for Gore

No influence

Weak influence to vote for Bush

Strong influence to vote for Bush

26. Was your opinion of Al Gore positively or negatively influenced by your experience under President Clinton?

Strongly negative

Somewhat negative

No influence

Somewhat positive

Strongly positive

27. Was your opinion of George W. Bush positively or negatively influenced by your experience under President Bush?

Strongly negative

Somewhat negative

No influence

Somewhat positive

Strongly positive



## **IMPORTANCE OF DIFFERENT FACTORS?**

28. Rank in order of importance to you the factor that most influenced your vote.

Candidate

Party

Service under President Clinton

Core Values/Ethos

Other

## **EFFECT OF MARINE PEERS**

29. How do you think other Marine officers voted?

Most voted for Gore

Most voted for Bush

Evenly divided

No idea

30. Which candidate do you feel was supported by most Marine officers?

Gore

Bush

Other

No idea

31. Do you think you were influenced at all by the discussions, opinions, and comments of your fellow Marines?

Not at all

Some

A great deal

32. Did you feel it was important for Marine officers to support one candidate or another?

Not important

Somewhat important

Very important

33. Have you ever seen or heard a negative opinion or reaction toward a Marine who may have openly expressed support for a candidate or platform not supported by most of your peers?

Never

Sometimes

Often

## **DEMOGRAPHICS**

34. What region of the country are you from?

Northeast

South

Midwest

West

35. What was your commissioning source?

PLC/OCS

ROTC

USNA

MECEP/ECP

36. What is your sex?

Male

Female

37. What is your race/ethnicity?

White/Caucasian

Black/African-American

Hispanic

Other

38. What is your MOS community?

Aviation

Ground Combat Arms

Support

## **OPEN COMMENTS**

39. Do you have any other comments as to what influenced your vote?

## **CONCLUSION**

Thank you again for taking the time to fill out this survey. I will be happy to share the final statistical results of the survey with anyone interested. Again, no personal identities or answers will be revealed and comments will remain anonymous. If you wish to make further comments please contact me at [cdchen@nps.navy.mil](mailto:cdchen@nps.navy.mil).

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## APPENDIX B. SURVEY RESPONSE FREQUENCIES

This appendix contains response frequencies for the Marine Corps NPS student survey.

### WHO DID THEY VOTE FOR?

1. Who did you prefer in the 2000 presidential election?

138 Eligible Respondents

138 Respondents Answered Question # 1

1-1 11 7.97% Strong for Gore

1-2 6 4.35% Weak for Gore

1-3 6 4.35% Other

1-4 31 22.46% Weak for Bush

1-5 84 60.87% Strong for Bush

0 0.00% Missing Cases

### EFFECT OF PARTY?

2. Are you currently registered with a political party? If so, which party?

137 Respondents Answered Question # 2

2-1 11 8.03% Democrat

2-2 74 54.01% Republican

2-3 0 0.00% Other

2-4 52 37.96% No preference/not registered

1 0.72% Missing Cases

3. Have you ever contributed your time or money to a political party? If so, which party?

137 Respondents Answered Question # 3

3-1 3 2.19% Democrat

3-2 20 14.60% Republican

3-3 1 0.73% Other

3-4 113 82.48% None

1 0.72% Missing Cases

4. How long have you been affiliated with your current political party of choice?

137 Respondents Answered Question # 4

4-1 79 57.66% Since before 1992

4-2 8 5.84% Since 1993-1996

4-3 7 5.11% Since 1996-2000

4-4 43 31.39% Never joined a party or preferred one

1 0.72% Missing Cases

5. Did you make a financial contribution to a political party before the last Presidential election?

137 Respondents Answered Question # 5

5-1	125	91.24%	No
5-2	1	0.73%	Democratic Party
5-3	9	6.57%	Republican Party
5-4	2	1.46%	Other
	1	0.72%	Missing Cases

6. Did you attend any political party functions before the last election?

136 Respondents Answered Question # 6

6-1	130	95.59%	No
6-2	0	0.00%	Democratic
6-3	5	3.68%	Republican
6-4	1	0.74%	Other
	2	1.45%	Missing Cases

7. Which party do you prefer because of its domestic policy platform?

137 Respondents Answered Question # 7

7-1	11	8.03%	Strong Democratic
7-2	8	5.84%	Weak Democratic
7-3	22	16.06%	Neither
7-4	37	27.01%	Weak Republican
7-5	59	43.07%	Strong Republican
	1	0.72%	Missing Cases

8. Which party do you prefer because of its foreign policy platform?

136 Respondents Answered Question # 8

8-1	9	6.62%	Strong Democratic
8-2	2	1.47%	Weak Democratic
8-3	12	8.82%	Neither
8-4	31	22.79%	Weak Republican
8-5	82	60.29%	Strong Republican
	2	1.45%	Missing Cases

9. Which party do you prefer because of its defense policy platform?

137 Respondents Answered Question # 9

9-1	6	4.38%	Strong Democratic
9-2	0	0.00%	Weak Democratic
9-3	8	5.84%	Neither
9-4	31	22.63%	Weak Republican
9-5	92	67.15%	Strong Republican
	1	0.72%	Missing Cases

10. Does your family (father, mother, siblings) tend to primarily support one party over the other? If so, which party?

136 Respondents Answered Question # 10

10-1	31	22.79%	Democrat
10-2	68	50.00%	Republican
10-3	1	0.74%	Other
10-4	36	26.47%	None
2		1.45%	Missing Cases

11. Which would you say is more important in your voting choice, the candidate's political party or the candidate's stance on specific issues?

137 Respondents Answered Question # 11

11-1	6	4.38%	Party is very important
11-2	9	6.57%	Party is somewhat important
11-3	18	13.14%	Both about equal
11-4	13	9.49%	Issues are somewhat important
11-5	91	66.42%	Issues are very important
1		0.72%	Missing Cases

#### OPINIONS OF CANDIDATES?

12. Which candidate's domestic platform did you prefer? (abortion/gun control/social security)

136 Respondents Answered Question # 12

12-1	11	8.09%	Strong Gore
12-2	14	10.29%	Weak Gore
12-3	8	5.88%	Neither
12-4	39	28.68%	Weak Bush
12-5	64	47.06%	Strong Bush
2		1.45%	Missing Cases

13. Which candidate's foreign policy platform did you prefer? (peacekeeping/international trade)

137 Respondents Answered Question # 13

13-1	8	5.84%	Strong Gore
13-2	7	5.11%	Weak Gore
13-3	9	6.57%	Neither
13-4	44	32.12%	Weak Bush
13-5	69	50.36%	Strong Bush
1		0.72%	Missing Cases

14. Which candidate's defense policy platform did you prefer? (weapons/missions/quality of life)

137 Respondents Answered Question # 14

14-1 5 3.65% Strong Gore  
 14-2 3 2.19% Weak Gore  
 14-3 7 5.11% Neither  
 14-4 34 24.82% Weak Bush  
 14-5 88 64.23% Strong Bush  
 1 0.72% Missing Cases

15. Which candidate's character did you prefer?

137 Respondents Answered Question # 15

15-1 10 7.30% Strong Gore  
 15-2 4 2.92% Weak Gore  
 15-3 16 11.68% Neither  
 15-4 20 14.60% Weak Bush  
 15-5 87 63.50% Strong Bush  
 1 0.72% Missing Cases

16. Which candidate's personality did you prefer?

137 Respondents Answered Question # 16

16-1 8 5.84% Strong Gore  
 16-2 4 2.92% Weak Gore  
 16-3 21 15.33% Neither  
 16-4 37 27.01% Weak Bush  
 16-5 67 48.91% Strong Bush  
 1 0.72% Missing Cases

17. Which candidate had the better military record?

137 Respondents Answered Question # 17

17-1 14 10.22% Strong Gore  
 17-2 18 13.14% Weak Gore  
 17-3 62 45.26% Neither  
 17-4 21 15.33% Weak Bush  
 17-5 22 16.06% Strong Bush  
 1 0.72% Missing Cases

18. Rank in order of importance to you the following:

	Ranked 1	Ranked 2	Ranked 3	Ranked 4	Ranked 5
defense policy	15 11.28%	45 31.47%	39 28.89%	33 25.19%	3 2.31%
domestic policy	33 24.81%	36 25.17%	40 29.63%	23 17.56%	2 1.54%
foreign policy	13 9.77%	36 25.17%	41 30.37%	32 24.43%	11 8.46%
character	66 49.62%	17 11.89%	12 8.89%	36 27.48%	4 3.08%
personality	6 4.51%	9 6.29%	3 2.22%	7 5.34%	110 84.62%
Missing Cases	2 1.48%	-8 -5.93%	0 0.00%	4 2.96%	5 3.70%

## EFFECT OF ETHOS?

19. Which candidate best exemplified Marine Corps' core values?

136 Respondents Answered Question # 19

19-1	4	2.94%	Stong Gore
19-2	6	4.41%	Weak Gore
19-3	24	17.65%	Both about equal
19-4	44	32.35%	Weak Bush
19-5	58	42.65%	Strong Bush
	2	1.45%	Missing Cases

20. Which candidate did you think would best support a "warfighting" ethos?

136 Respondents Answered Question # 20

20-1	3	2.21%	Stong Gore
20-2	3	2.21%	Weak Gore
20-3	14	10.29%	Both about equal
20-4	48	35.29%	Weak Bush
20-5	68	50.00%	Strong Bush
	2	1.45%	Missing Cases

## EFFECT OF CLINTON?

21. Did the military get physically stronger or weaker under President Clinton?  
(readiness/equipment/weapons systems)

137 Respondents Answered Question # 21

21-1	64	46.72%	Much weaker
21-2	53	38.69%	Somewhat weaker
21-3	9	6.57%	No change
21-4	8	5.84%	Somewhat stronger
21-5	3	2.19%	Much stronger
	1	0.72%	Missing Cases

22. Did the military's culture get stronger or weaker under President Clinton?  
(warfighting ethos/esprit de corps/discipline)

137 Respondents Answered Question # 22

22-1	72	52.55%	Much weaker
22-2	39	28.47%	Somewhat weaker
22-3	20	14.60%	No change
22-4	4	2.92%	Somewhat stronger
22-5	2	1.46%	Much stronger
	1	0.72%	Missing Cases



23. Did the country get economically stronger or weaker under President Clinton?

136 Respondents Answered Question # 23

23-1	1	0.74%	Much weaker
23-2	7	5.15%	Somewhat weaker
23-3	6	4.41%	No change
23-4	65	47.79%	Somewhat stronger
23-5	57	41.91%	Much stronger
	2	1.45%	Missing Cases

24. Did the American people's moral standards get higher or lower during President Clinton's terms?

137 Respondents Answered Question # 24

24-1	64	46.72%	Much lower
24-2	47	34.31%	Somewhat lower
24-3	22	16.06%	No change
24-4	0	0.00%	Somewhat higher
24-5	4	2.92%	Much higher
	1	0.72%	Missing Cases

25. How did your experiences during the Clinton administration influence your vote?

137 Respondents Answered Question # 25

25-1	8	5.84%	Strong influence to vote for Gore
25-2	2	1.46%	Weak influence to vote for Gore
25-3	25	18.25%	No influence
25-4	26	18.98%	Weak influence to vote for Bush
25-5	76	55.47%	Strong influence to vote for Bush
	1	0.72%	Missing Cases

26. Was your opinion of Al Gore positively or negatively influenced by your experience under President Clinton?

136 Respondents Answered Question # 26

26-1	46	33.82%	Strongly negative
26-2	52	38.24%	Somewhat negative
26-3	30	22.06%	No influence
26-4	3	2.21%	Somewhat positive
26-5	5	3.68%	Strongly positive
	2	1.45%	Missing Cases

27. Was your opinion of George W. Bush positively or negatively influenced by your experience under President Bush?

136 Respondents Answered Question # 27

27-1 3 2.21% Strongly negative  
 27-2 0 0.00% Somewhat negative  
 27-3 53 38.97% No influence  
 27-4 54 39.71% Somewhat positive  
 27-5 26 19.12% Strongly positive  
 2 1.45% Missing Cases

#### IMPORTANCE OF DIFFERENT FACTORS?

28. Rank in order of importance to you the factor that most influenced your vote.

136 Respondents Answered Question # 28

	Ranked 1	Ranked 2	Ranked 3	Ranked 4	Ranked 5
Candidate	61 44.53%	43 31.85%	19 14.07%	9 7.03%	4 3.13%
Political party	7 5.11%	31 22.96%	49 36.30%	34 26.56%	15 11.72%
President Clinton	8 5.84%	11 8.15%	29 21.48%	48 37.50%	37 28.91%
Core values/ethos	46 33.58%	43 31.85%	27 20.00%	19 14.84%	1 0.78%
Other	15 10.95%	7 5.19%	11 8.15%	18 14.06%	71 55.47%

#### EFFECT OF MARINE PEERS

29. How do you think other Marine officers voted?

137 Respondents Answered Question # 29

29-1 0 0.00% Most voted for Gore  
 29-2 129 94.16% Most voted for Bush  
 29-3 1 0.73% Evenly divided  
 29-4 7 5.11% No idea  
 1 0.72% Missing Cases

30. Which candidate do you feel was supported by most Marine officers?

136 Respondents Answered Question # 30

30-1 0 0.00% Gore  
 30-2 127 93.38% Bush  
 30-3 1 0.74% Other  
 30-4 8 5.88% No idea  
 2 1.45% Missing Cases

31. Do you think you were influenced at all by the discussions, opinions, and comments of your fellow Marines?

137 Respondents Answered Question # 31

31-1 94 68.61% Not at all  
 31-2 42 30.66% Some  
 31-3 1 0.73% A great deal  
 1 0.72% Missing Cases

32. Did you feel it was important for Marine officers to support one candidate or another?

137 Respondents Answered Question # 32

32-1 75 54.74% Not important

32-2 25 18.25% Somewhat important

32-3 37 27.01% Very important

1 0.72% Missing Cases

33. Have you ever seen or heard a negative opinion or reaction toward a Marine who may have openly expressed support for a candidate or platform not supported by most of your peers?

137 Respondents Answered Question # 33

33-1 66 48.18% Never

33-2 59 43.07% Sometimes

33-3 12 8.76% Often

1 0.72% Missing Cases

## DEMOGRAPHICS

34. What region of the country are you from?

137 Respondents Answered Question # 34

34-1 28 20.44% Northeast

34-2 45 32.85% South

34-3 37 27.01% Midwest

34-4 27 19.71% West

1 0.72% Missing Cases

35. What was your commissioning source?

136 Respondents Answered Question # 35

35-1 48 35.29% PLC/OCS

35-2 30 22.06% ROTC

35-3 32 23.53% USNA

35-4 26 19.12% MECEP/ECP

2 1.45% Missing Cases

36. What is your sex?

137 Respondents Answered Question # 36

36-1 135 98.54% Male

36-2 2 1.46% Female

1 0.72% Missing Cases

37. What is your race/ethnicity?

134 Respondents Answered Question # 37

37-1	118	88.06%	White/Caucasian
37-2	9	6.72%	Black/African-American
37-3	5	3.73%	Hispanic
37-4	2	1.49%	Other
4		2.90%	Missing Cases

38. What is your MOS community?

136 Respondents Answered Question # 38

38-1	37	27.21%	Aviation
38-2	40	29.41%	Ground combat arms
38-3	59	43.38%	Support
2		1.45%	Missing Cases

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## **APPENDIX C.    SELECTED WRITTEN COMMENTS**

### **Strong for Gore**

Bush was an alcoholic and did cocaine. He also has no clue on foreign policy.

Superior Democratic Environmental Policies and Separation of Church and State Ideals

Gore served in Vietnam, Bush did not. Bush went UA. Gore did not. Gore is strong on environment. Bush is not.

I voted for the candidate I felt would best serve the nation with the values I hold.

I am an advocate of Social Security/Affirmative Action. Thus, the Republican party tends not to support either.

### **Weak for Gore**

Question #28 is biased--mention of Clinton. Bush=missile defense and less pay than Gore's plan

### **Other**

I vote third party. Both Gore and Bush's platforms were just rhetoric that was not going to be transformed into r

My vote went to neither the Democratic candidate nor the Republican candidate as a protest vote.

I voted Libertarian to vote against the mainstream parties

MCCAIN IN 2004!

### **Weak for Bush**

Since I don't know either of the candidates personally, I relied on the media for my view on the candidates.

Lesser of two evils (by a whole lot)

Two deployments under Clinton enforcing an unclear foreign policy toward Iraq.

Economic policy, stand on abortion and welfare-related issues, and foreign policy

My first choice in the primaries was John McCain but then after that, Mr. Bush was the

best choice.

Backlash against distorted media focus on non-issues.

McCain dropped out so I had to choose someone else.

To me the republican congress made the economy better, not Clinton leadership #23, that influenced me to vote republican

### **Strong for Bush**

I do not dwell on party affiliations. I consider myself conservative.

Voting record vs. campaign rhetoric

Choose the lesser of two evils.

The presidency is the last bastion of integrity. President Clinton tarnished it severely, and got away with it.

I did not vote. And don't vote.

Former President Clinton hastened the moral decay of the US Military

Reputation of G. W. Bush ticket affiliates (Cheney and Powell) was strong influence in favor of voting for him.

Character is what counted most in this election after having a President with very little character and morals.

Gore overshadowed by Clinton=great domestic policy, adequate foreign policy but moral/ethical base was appalling.

Open homosexuality. I will leave the military when we allow social engineering to adversely affect readiness!!

Gore seems to be a politician. Bush is a leader. The debates proved it to me.

On nearly every single issue, the democrat party caters to the lazy and is pushing us toward a socialist state

My vote was most influenced by my Christian faith and the candidate that most closely aligned with my faith.

Question 23- Economic benefits experienced under Clinton were not attributable to his leadership.

Would have voted for Allen Keys, but I didn't think he could win.

Registered Republican for primary voting purposes, consider myself independent  
Educated Voter most important!

Voted for the candidate that would make the right decisions in office

My preference would have been John McCain. However, he did not receive the  
Republican nomination.



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